

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

CHAPTER XI.

THE sun sank lower; the western breeze floated cool and fresh into the house. As the evening advanced, the cheerful ring of the village clock came nearer and nearer. Field and flower-garden felt the influence of the hour, and shed their sweetest fragrance. The birds in Norah's aviary sunned themselves in the evening stillness, and sang their farewell gratitude to the dying day.

Staggered in its progress for a time only, the pitiless routine of the house went horribly on its daily way. The panic-stricken servants took their blind refuge in the duties proper to the hour. The footman softly laid the table for dinner. The maid sat waiting in senseless doubt, with the hot-water jugs for the bedrooms ranged near her in their customary row. The gardener, who had been ordered to come to his master, with vouchers for money that he had paid in excess of his instructions, said his character was dear to him, and left the vouchers at his appointed time. Custom that never yields, and Death that never spares, met on the wreck of human happiness—and Death gave way.

Heavily the thunder-clouds of Affliction had gathered over the house—heavily, but not at their darkest yet. At five, that evening, the shock of the calamity had struck its blow. Before another hour had passed, the disclosure of the husband's sudden death was followed by the suspense of the wife's mortal peril. She lay helpless on her widowed bed; her own life, and the life of her unborn child, trembling in the balance.

But one mind still held possession of its resources—but one guiding spirit now moved helpfully in the house of mourning.

If Miss Garth's early days had been passed as calmly and as happily as her later life at Combe-Raven, she might have sunk under the cruel necessities of the time. But the governess's youth had been tried in the ordeal of family affliction; and she met her terrible duties with the steady courage of a woman who had learnt to suffer. Alone, she had faced the trial of telling the daughters that they were fatherless. Alone, she

now struggled to sustain them, when the dreadful certainty of their bereavement was at last impressed on their minds.

Her least anxiety was for the elder sister. The agony of Norah's grief had forced its way outward to the natural relief of tears. It was not so with Magdalen. Tearless and speechless, she sat in the room where the revelation of her father's death had first reached her; her face, unnaturally petrified by the sterile sorrow of old age—a white changeless blank, fearful to look at. Nothing roused, nothing melted her. She only said, "Don't speak to me; don't touch me. Let me bear it by myself"—and fell silent again. The first great grief which had darkened the sisters' lives, had, as it seemed, changed their every-day characters already.

The twilight fell, and faded; and the summer night came brightly. As the first carefully shaded light was kindled in the sick-room, the physician who had been summoned from Bristol, arrived to consult with the medical attendant of the family. He could give no comfort; he could only say, "We must try, and hope. The shock which struck her, when she overheard the news of her husband's death, has prostrated her strength at the time when she needed it most. No effort to preserve her shall be neglected. I will stay here for the night."

He opened one of the windows to admit more air as he spoke. The view overlooked the drive in front of the house, and the road outside. Little groups of people were standing before the lodge-gates, looking in. "If those persons make any noise," said the doctor, "they must be warned away." There was no need to warn them: they were only the labourers who had worked on the dead man's property, and here and there some women and children from the village. They were all thinking of him—some talking of him—and it quickened their sluggish minds to look at his house. The gentlefolks thereabouts were mostly kind to them (the men said) but none like *him*. The women whispered to each other of his comforting ways, when he came into their cottages. "He was a cheerful man, poor soul; and thoughtful of us, too: he never came in, and stared at meal times; the rest of 'em help us, and scold us—all *he* ever said was, better luck next time." So they stood, and talked of him, and looked at his house and

grounds, and moved off clumsily by twos and threes, with the dim sense that the sight of his pleasant face would never comfort them again. The dullest head among them knew, that night, that the hard ways of poverty would be all the harder to walk on now he was gone.

A little later, news was brought to the bed-chamber door that old Mr. Clare had come alone to the house, and was waiting in the hall below, to hear what the physician said. Miss Garth was not able to go down to him herself: she sent a message. He said to the servant, "I'll come, and ask again, in two hours' time"—and went out slowly. Unlike other men in all things else the sudden death of his old friend had produced no discernible change in him. The feeling implied in the errand of inquiry that had brought him to the house, was the one betrayal of human sympathy which escaped the rugged, impenetrable old man.

He came again, when the two hours had expired; and this time Miss Garth saw him.

They shook hands in silence. She waited; she nerved herself to hear him speak of his lost friend. No: he never mentioned the dreadful accident, he never alluded to the dreadful death. He said these words, "Is she better, or worse?" and said no more. Was the tribute of his grief for the husband, sternly suppressed under the expression of his anxiety for the wife? The nature of the man, unliably antagonistic to the world and the world's customs, might justify some such interpretation of his conduct as this. He repeated his question, "Is she better, or worse?"

Miss Garth answered him,

"No better; if there is any change, it is a change for the worse."

They spoke those words at the window of the morning-room which opened to the garden. Mr. Clare paused, after hearing the reply to his inquiry, stepped out on to the walk, then turned on a sudden, and spoke again:

"Has the doctor given her up?" he asked.

"He has not concealed from us that she is in danger. We can only pray for her."

The old man laid his hand on Miss Garth's arm as she answered him, and looked her attentively in the face.

"You believe in prayer?" he said.

Miss Garth drew sorrowfully back from him.

"You might have spared me that question, sir, at such a time as this."

He took no notice of her answer; his eyes were still fastened on her face.

"Pray," he said, "as you never prayed before, for the preservation of Mrs. Vanstone's life."

He left her. His voice and manner implied some unutterable dread of the future, which his words had not confessed. Miss Garth followed him into the garden, and called to him. He heard her, but he never turned back; he quickened his pace, as if he desired to avoid her. She watched him across the lawn in the warm summer moonlight. She saw his white withered

hands, saw them suddenly against the black background of the shrubbery, raised and wrung above his head. They dropped—the trees shrouded him in darkness—he was gone.

Miss Garth went back to the suffering woman, with the burden on her mind of one anxiety more.

It was then past eleven o'clock. Some little time had elapsed since she had seen the sisters, and spoken to them. The inquiries she addressed to one of the female servants, only elicited the information that they were both in their rooms. She delayed her return to the mother's bedside to say her parting words of comfort to the daughters, before she left them for the night. Norah's room was the nearest. She softly opened the door and looked in. The kneeling figure by the bedside, told her that God's help had found the fatherless daughter in her affliction. Grateful tears gathered in her eyes as she looked: she softly closed the door, and went on to Magdalen's room. There, doubt stayed her feet at the threshold; and she waited for a moment before going in.

A sound in the room caught her ear—the monotonous rustling of a woman's dress, now distant, now near; passing without cessation from end to end over the floor—a sound which told her that Magdalen was pacing to and fro in the secrecy of her own chamber. Miss Garth knocked. The rustling ceased; the door was opened, and the sad young face confronted her, locked in its cold despair; the large light eyes looked mechanically into hers, as vacant and as tearless as ever.

That look wrung the heart of the faithful woman, who had trained her and loved her from a child. She took Magdalen tenderly in her arms.

"Oh, my love," she said, "no tears yet! Oh, if I could see you as I have seen Norah! Speak to me, Magdalen—try if you can speak to me."

She tried, and spoke:

"Norah," she said, "feels no remorse. He was not serving Norah's interests when he went to his death: he was serving mine."

With that terrible answer, she put her cold lips to Miss Garth's cheek.

"Let me bear it by myself," she said, and gently closed the door.

Again Miss Garth waited at the threshold, and again the sound of the rustling dress passed to and fro—now far, now near—to and fro with a cruel, mechanical regularity, that chilled the warmest sympathy, and daunted the boldest hope.

The night passed. It had been agreed, if no change for the better showed itself by the morning, that the London physician whom Mrs. Vanstone had consulted some months since, should be summoned to the house on the next day. No change for the better appeared; and the physician was sent for.

As the morning advanced, Frank came to make inquiries, from the cottage. Had Mr. Clare entrusted to his son the duty which he had personally performed on the previous day, through

reluctance to meet Miss Garth again after what he had said to her? It might be so. Frank could throw no light on the subject; he was not in his father's confidence. He looked pale and bewildered. His first inquiries after Magdalen, showed how his weak nature had been shaken by the catastrophe. He was not capable of framing his own questions: the words faltered on his lips, and the ready tears came into his eyes. Miss Garth's heart warmed to him for the first time. Grief has this that is noble in it—it accepts all sympathy, come whence it may. She encouraged the lad by a few kind words, and took his hand at parting.

Before noon, Frank returned with a second message. His father desired to know whether Mr. Pendril was not expected at Combe-Raven on that day. If the lawyer's arrival was looked for, Frank was directed to be in attendance at the station, and to take him to the cottage, where a bed would be placed at his disposal. This message took Miss Garth by surprise. It showed that Mr. Clare had been made acquainted with his dead friend's purpose of sending for Mr. Pendril. Was the old man's thoughtful offer of hospitality, another indirect expression of the natural human distress which he perversely concealed? or was he aware of some secret necessity for Mr. Pendril's presence, of which the bereaved family had been kept in total ignorance? Miss Garth was too heart-sick and hopeless to dwell on either question. She told Frank that Mr. Pendril had been expected at three o'clock, and sent him back with her thanks.

Shortly after his departure, such anxieties on Magdalen's account as her mind was now able to feel, were relieved by better news than her last night's experience had inclined her to hope for. Norah's influence had been exerted to rouse her sister: and Norah's patient sympathy had set the prisoned grief free. Magdalen had suffered severely—suffered inevitably, with such a nature as hers—in the effort that relieved her. The healing tears had not come gently; they had burst from her with a torturing, passionate vehemence—but Norah had never left her till the struggle was over, and the calm had come. These better tidings encouraged Miss Garth to withdraw to her own room, and to take the rest which she needed sorely. Worn out in body and mind, she slept from sheer exhaustion—slept heavily and dreamlessly for some hours. It was between three and four in the afternoon, when she was roused by one of the female servants. The woman had a note in her hand—a note left by Mr. Clare the younger, with a message desiring that it might be delivered to Miss Garth immediately. The name written in the lower corner of the envelope was “William Pendril.” The lawyer had arrived.

Miss Garth opened the note. After a few first sentences of sympathy and condolence, the writer announced his arrival at Mr. Clare's; and then proceeded, apparently in his professional capacity, to make a very startling request.

“If,” he wrote, “any change for the better in Mrs. Vanstone should take place—whether it is only an improvement for the time, or whether it is the permanent improvement for which we all hope—in either case, I entreat you to let me know of it immediately. It is of the last importance that I should see her, in the event of her gaining strength enough to give me her attention for five minutes, and of her being able at the expiration of that time to sign her name. May I beg that you will communicate my request, in the strictest confidence, to the medical men in attendance. They will understand, and you will understand, the vital importance I attach to this interview, when I tell you that I have arranged to defer to it all other business claims on me; and that I hold myself in readiness to obey your summons, at any hour of the day or night.”

In those terms the letter ended. Miss Garth read it twice over. At the second reading, the request which the lawyer now addressed to her, and the farewell words which had escaped Mr. Clare's lips the day before, connected themselves vaguely in her mind. There was some other serious interest in suspense, known to Mr. Pendril and known to Mr. Clare, besides the first and foremost interest of Mrs. Vanstone's recovery. Whom did it affect? The children? Were they threatened by some new calamity which their mother's signature might avert? What did it mean? Did it mean that Mr. Vanstone had died without leaving a will?

In her distress and confusion of mind, Miss Garth was incapable of reasoning with herself, as she might have reasoned at a happier time. She hastened to the ante-chamber of Mrs. Vanstone's room; and, after explaining Mr. Pendril's position towards the family, placed his letter in the hands of the medical men. They both answered without hesitation, to the same purpose. Mrs. Vanstone's condition rendered any such interview as the lawyer desired, a total impossibility. If she rallied from her present prostration, Miss Garth should be at once informed of the improvement. In the mean time, the answer to Mr. Pendril might be conveyed in one word—Impossible.

“You see what importance Mr. Pendril attaches to the interview?” said Miss Garth.

Yes: both the doctors said so.

“My mind is lost and confused, gentlemen, in this dreadful suspense. Can you either of you guess why the signature is wanted? or what the object of the interview may be? I have only seen Mr. Pendril when he has come here on former visits: I have no claim to justify me in questioning him. Will you look at the letter again? Do you think it implies that Mr. Vanstone has never made a will?”

“I think it can hardly imply that,” said one of the doctors. “But, even supposing Mr. Vanstone to have died intestate, the law takes due care of the interests of his widow and his children—”

“Would it do so,” interposed the other

medical man, "if the property happened to be in land?"

"I am not sure in that case. Do you happen to know, Miss Garth, whether Mr. Vanstone's property was in money or in land?"

"In money," replied Miss Garth. "I have heard him say so on more than one occasion."

"Then I can relieve your mind by speaking from my own experience. The law, if he has died intestate, gives a third of his property to his widow, and divides the rest equally among his children."

"But if Mrs. Vanstone——?"

"If Mrs. Vanstone should die," pursued the doctor, completing the question which Miss Garth had not the heart to conclude for herself, "I believe I am right in telling you that the property would, as a matter of legal course, go to the children. Whatever necessity there may be for the interview which Mr. Pendril requests, I can see no reason for connecting it with the question of Mr. Vanstone's presumed intestacy. But, by all means, put the question, for the satisfaction of your own mind, to Mr. Pendril himself."

Miss Garth withdrew to take the course which the doctor advised. After communicating to Mr. Pendril the medical decision which, thus far, refused him the interview that he sought, she added a brief statement of the legal question she had put to the doctors; and hinted delicately at her natural anxiety to be informed of the motives which had led the lawyer to make his request. The answer she received was guarded in the extreme: it did not impress her with a favourable opinion of Mr. Pendril. He confirmed the doctors' interpretation of the law, in general terms only; expressed his intention of waiting at the cottage, in the hope that a change for the better might yet enable Mrs. Vanstone to see him; and closed his letter without the slightest explanation of his motives, and without a word of reference to the question of the existence, or the non-existence, of Mr. Vanstone's will.

The marked caution of the lawyer's reply dwelt uneasily on Miss Garth's mind, until the long-expected event of the day recalled all her thoughts to her one absorbing anxiety on Mrs. Vanstone's account.

Early in the evening, the physician from London arrived. He watched long by the bedside of the suffering woman; he remained longer still in consultation with his medical brethren; he went back again to the sick-room, before Miss Garth could prevail on him to communicate to her the opinion at which he had arrived.

When he came out into the ante-chamber for the second time, he silently took a chair by her side. She looked in his face; and the last faint hope died in her before he opened his lips.

"I must speak the hard truth," he said, gently. "All that *can* be done, *has* been done. The next four-and-twenty hours, at most, will end your suspense. If Nature makes no effort in that

time—I grieve to say it—you must prepare yourself for the worst."

Those words said all: they were prophetic of the end.

The night passed; and she lived through it. The next day came; and she lingered on till the clock pointed to five. At that hour, the tidings of her husband's death had dealt the mortal blow. When the hour came round again, the mercy of God let her go to him in the better world. Her daughters were kneeling at the bedside, as her spirit passed away. She left them unconscious of their presence; mercifully and happily insensible to the pang of the last farewell.

Her child survived her till the evening was on the wane, and the sunset was dim in the quiet western heaven. As the darkness came, the light of the frail little life—faint and feeble from the first—flickered, and went out. All that was earthly of mother and child lay, that night, on the same bed. The Angel of Death had done his awful bidding; and the two Sisters were left alone in the world.

CHAPTER XII.

EARLIER than usual, on the morning of Thursday, the twenty-third of July, Mr. Clare appeared at the door of his cottage, and stepped out into the little strip of garden attached to his residence.

After he had taken a few turns backwards and forwards, alone, he was joined by a spare, quiet, grey-haired man, whose personal appearance was totally devoid of marked character of any kind; whose inexpressive face and conventionally-quiet manner presented nothing that attracted approval, and nothing that inspired dislike. This was Mr. Pendril—this was the man on whose lips hung the future of the orphans at Combe-Raven.

"The time is getting on," he said, looking towards the shrubbery, as he joined Mr. Clare. "My appointment with Miss Garth is for eleven o'clock: it only wants ten minutes of the hour."

"Are you to see her alone?" asked Mr. Clare.

"I left Miss Garth to decide—after warning her, first of all, that the circumstances I am compelled to disclose are of a very serious nature."

"And *has* she decided?"

"She writes me word that she mentioned my appointment, and repeated the warning I had given her, to both the daughters. The elder of the two shrinks—and who can wonder at it?—from any discussion connected with the future, which requires her presence so soon as the day after the funeral. The younger one appears to have expressed no opinion on the subject. As I understand it, she suffers herself to be passively guided by her sister's example. My interview, therefore, will take place with Miss Garth alone—and it is a very great relief to me to know it."

He spoke the last words with more emphasis and energy than seemed habitual to him. Mr. Clare stopped, and looked at his guest attentively.

"You are almost as old as I am, sir," he said. "Has all your long experience as a lawyer not hardened you yet?"

"I never knew how little it had hardened me," replied Mr. Pendril, quietly, "until I returned from London yesterday to attend the funeral. I was not warned that the daughters had resolved on following their parents to the grave. I think their presence made the closing scene of this dreadful calamity doubly painful, and doubly touching. You saw how the great concourse of people were moved by it—and *they* were in ignorance of the truth; *they* knew nothing of the cruel necessity which takes me to the house this morning. The sense of that necessity—and the sight of those poor girls at the time when I felt my hard duty towards them most painfully—shook me, as a man of my years and my way of life, is not often shaken by any distress in the present, or any suspense in the future. I have not recovered it this morning: I hardly feel sure of myself yet."

"A man's composure—when he is a man like you—comes with the necessity for it," said Mr. Clare. "You must have had duties to perform as trying in their way, as the duty that lies before you this morning."

Mr. Pendril shook his head. "Many duties as serious; many stories more romantic. No duty so trying; no story so hopeless, as this."

With those words, they parted. Mr. Pendril left the garden for the shrubbery path which led to Combe-Raven. Mr. Clare returned to the cottage.

On reaching the passage, he looked through the open door of his little parlour, and saw Frank sitting there in idle wretchedness, with his head resting wearily on his hand.

"I have had an answer from your employers in London," said Mr. Clare. "In consideration of what has happened, they will allow the offer they made you to stand over for another month."

Frank changed colour, and rose nervously from his chair.

"Are my prospects altered?" he asked. "Are Mr. Vanstone's plans for me not to be carried out? He told Magdalen his will had provided for her. She repeated his words to me; she said I ought to know all that his goodness and generosity had done for both of us. How can his death make a change? Has anything happened?"

"Wait till Mr. Pendril comes back from Combe-Raven," said his father. "Question him—don't question me."

The ready tears rose in Frank's eyes.

"You won't be hard on me?" he pleaded faintly. "You won't expect me to go back to London, without seeing Magdalen first?"

Mr. Clare looked thoughtfully at his son; and considered a little, before he replied.

"You may dry your eyes," he said. "You shall see Magdalen before you go back."

He left the room, after making that reply, and withdrew to his study. The books lay ready to his hand, as usual. He opened one of them, and

set himself to read in the customary manner. But his attention wandered; and his eyes strayed away from time to time, to the empty chair opposite—the chair in which his old friend and gossip had sat and wrangled with him good humouredly for many and many a year past. After a struggle with himself, he closed the book. "Damn the chair!" he said: "it *will* talk of him; and I must listen." He reached down his pipe from the wall, and mechanically filled it with tobacco. His hand shook; his eyes wandered back to the old place; and a heavy sigh came from him unwillingly. That empty chair was the only earthly argument for which he had no answer: his heart owned its defeat, and moistened his eyes in spite of him. "He has got the better of me at last," said the rugged old man. "There is one weak place left in me still—and *he* has found it."

Meanwhile, Mr. Pendril entered the shrubbery, and followed the path which led to the lonely garden and the desolate house. He was met at the door by the man-servant, who was apparently waiting in expectation of his arrival.

"I have an appointment with Miss Garth. Is she ready to see me?"

"Quite ready, sir."

"Is she alone?"

"Yes, sir."

"In the room which was Mr. Vanstone's study?"

"In that room, sir."

The servant opened the door; and Mr. Pendril went in.

GIGANTIC ATTRACTION.

I NEVER, from the story-book period of childhood, entirely shook off my intense distrust of every thing that, in human form, approached exaggerated proportions. Many a delightful polka have I sacrificed to the craven fear (I am of the feminine gender) which prompted me to transfer some immensely tall partner to my sister—rather than put finger on his colossal arm. Strangely enough, mingled with all this was a kind of fascination that irresistibly impelled me to approach, or converse about, the thing I feared. To gaze, however, was one thing; to touch, another.

This lingering impression of my childhood was destined to involve me, when grown up, in a singular train of circumstances:

Twenty years since, in the course of a few weeks' residence at M—, in the south of France, I happened to be passing down the principal street, when my eye was caught by a placard intimating that the "Greatest Man of the Age" had arrived at M—, and had consented to receive its citizens without any more marked distinction of rank, sex, or age, than was conveyed in the charge of five sous for children under eight, as against one franc for those of any riper age. Monsieur Dermot O'Leary requested that, in view of the immense concourse to be expected from the catholic nature of this

invitation, visitors would limit their stay to five minutes.

"Dermot O'Leary." The name, as that of a public man, did not sound familiar. I was beginning to speculate how in the world our Cæsar had "grown so great," when a young gentleman, in a blue frock, suddenly hung out a second placard, presenting to my startled eyes the figure of a man of colossal stature, with his arm extended horizontally, about two feet above the head of another, presumed to be of ordinary height, standing at his side.

A GIANT! I felt my blood curdle. I shrank back instinctively; but, in a moment, the accustomed counter-feeling urged me forward, and I perused, from end to end, the condensed biography of the "Greatest Man of the Age," as set forth, in type inaptly small, on the bill. "Age, twenty-seven; height, eight feet, wanting an inch; weight, nineteen stone; father and mother, average size; sister, six feet four, shooting up." Such were some of the particulars. A very respectable monster indeed.

I tried to move on. Impossible! My feet seemed rooted to the ground. A strange longing to see the creature was becoming every instant more importunate. To enter *alone*, however, was a thing not to be thought of. Where was the expected crowd? Safely ensconced in their midst, I might have enjoyed my gaze, and vanished.

As I hesitated, two persons came forth, in eager conversation. I caught a few words, which were not uttered in a confidential tone—"most interesting,"—"singular physiological phenomenon,"—"crowd too dense for—"

The last expression sufficed. I paid my franc, and, ascending a few stairs on the right, arrived at a heavy crimson curtain, before which was seated the young gentleman in blue. He took my check, and demanded my parasol. Why did he want my parasol? Did he think I might injure his little giant with that lethal weapon? On no consideration that could be proposed to me would I place myself within its length of the Greatest Man, but part with it I would not. Seeing me resolved, the boy lifted the curtain, and admitted me. To my utter astonishment I was *alone*!

A sickening horror seized me. I clutched the curtain.

"Open . . . let me out," I gasped, trying madly, but in vain, to find the opening.

"P-pardon me," said a very small, nervous voice, somewhere near the ceiling. "Will you not t-take a chair?"

I lifted my eyes to the region of the little voice. There, within a few paces of me, stood the giant. How he entered I never knew; probably through another curtained entrance at the side. He was in complete evening dress, even to white cravat and gloves; he carried an opera hat, and bore altogether the appearance of a highly-magnified waiter with a tea-tray. His immense countenance conveyed no ideas of savage passion or inordinate appetite. It was a perfect sea of vacuous good humour,

chequered with an expression of awkward diffidence, which, in an individual of his proportions, struck me as absurd. If such a word as "finikin" could with any propriety be applied to a gentleman eight feet high and broad in proportion, here was that monster.

I could not restrain a faint giggle; then, angry with myself, coloured to the eyes, and made a new attempt to get away.

If giants giggle, the sound emitted by the greatest man partook of that character. Blush I am sure he did, and the idea that he was at least as alarmed and embarrassed as myself, was so far reassuring, that, though annoyed, I was still sensible of the unkindness of quitting so shy a monster without the interchange of a word. But what to say?

The giant shifted from one huge foot to another, curled his moustache with an effort to appear at ease, and finally, with another giggle, inquired:

"Did you ever, madame, see so large a man as myself?"

I murmured, faintly, that I could not bear testimony to anything so prodigious.

The giant did not seem gratified. On the contrary, to my surprise he appeared to wince, and certainly knit his brows. The thought flashed across me, "Have I hurt his feelings? This immoderate structure is, after all, a deformity—a misfortune. How could I have been so thoughtless!"

"But," I hastened to add, with desperate politeness, "you, with your fine proportions—so—so well—"

Again I stopped, colouring scarlet. Here was I, an English lady, bred up in all the delicate restraints of society, coolly paying my franc for the privilege of a tête-à-tête with a monstrous stranger, of whose existence I had never before heard, openly discussing with him his personal appearance, and unable to advance any better apology for all this unreserve than that my friend was twice the ordinary size. I was resolved to put an end to the interview. Bowing slightly, as perfectly satisfied, I made a feint to go. But this movement seemed to give the giant, courage. He gently interposed his huge bulk.

"Let me hope, madam," he said, "you will not confine yourself too rigidly within the terms of my bill. My arrival is, at present, but little known in M—. It is rarely, indeed, that I—that is, I—Forgive me" (he sighed deeply). "All I mean to say is, that my time, every second of it, is completely at your service. Ask me any questions you please."

Questions! What could he mean? What do little people ask giants? How they are fed? Who cuts their hair? Where they take exercise unseen? If they ever find horses big enough to ride? What weather they have "up there"? The little voice broke on my meditations.

"Would you like," it asked, with a slight tremor, "to s-span my chest!"

"Sir!"

"Or p-poke my leg?"

Poke his leg! Hardly knowing what I did, but certainly acting on an impulse rather defensive than curious, I made a feeble dab with my parasol at one of those mighty members, which had been slid bashfully a few inches nearer to me.

The giant mistook my demonstration.

"Don't be afraid, I beg. No delusion, my dear madam. All fair flesh and blood, I pledge you my honour. The circumference of my calf is twenty-two inches and a quarter; that is to say, considerably more than your—your waist." Again the giant sighed.

It was excessively embarrassing. I could not make out whether my colossal friend expected compliment or condolence. If he was ashamed of his dreadful calf, why present it to my notice? If proud, why sigh?

Presently, he drew himself up to his full height, and, extending his arms like the sails of a windmill, invited me to pass beneath. In this attitude he appeared so very gigantic, that my courage, always wavering, gave way. The dread and antipathy of my nursery days came upon me with overwhelming power. I grew hot and cold, felt faint, began to cry.

The giant, alarmed, regained with a start his natural position.

"You are agitated, my dear madam! Permit me, I beseech you—the sofa—Oh, Alphonse!" (to the blue boy)—"a glass of water for madame! Quick!—"Is it possible," he continued, "that your generous, tender heart has suggested—dare I believe that . . . For Heaven's sake, answer! What, oh *what*, has moved you thus?"

"Your—size!" I gasped, half resentfully. And fainted.

I went home in a carriage, and was for several days far from well. During that interval I had numerous visitors, almost all of whom mentioned, as one of the topics of the hour, the advent and extraordinary success of Monsieur Dermot O'Leary, the renowned "géant Irlandais." As for me, I preserved the secret of our interview with religious care, trying, though with little success, to regard it rather as a horrible dream than an actual occurrence, and nursing myself diligently into travelling condition, with the fixed intention of quitting the giant-haunted precincts. In the mean time, with the curious inconsistency I have described, my ears drank in every word that bore reference to the great subject.

"Certainly. Remarkable man," I heard one of my visitors observing. "One is apt to associate some degree of awkwardness with the movement of large bodies. Now, with Monsieur Dermot O'Leary all is tranquil ease—careless grace—a complete—"

"So perfectly unembarrassed!" put in a lady. "His self-possession is singular! Sitting there, the object of every eye, most of them furnished with opera-glasses (for the room was literally crammed), you would have imagined him one of the least interested spectators, rather than the marvel all had come to see."

"Converses so well!"

"So thoroughly well! A most retentive memory."

"One thing seems to have been deeply impressed upon it," said the first speaker. "Did you notice the grateful fervid enthusiasm with which he alluded to the first—the very first—visit he received here? It gave me a strong prepossession in his favour: the more so, because it is clear to me that he is a man accustomed to exercise considerable self-control, and to preserve a calm exterior, whatever lurks within."

A calm exterior!

"I am confident," concluded my friend, with a smile, "that this first mysterious visitor was a lady."

I am afraid it was, I thought.

Left alone, I fell into a deep reverie. Something whispered that it was to my unlucky visit the monster had referred; but why on earth my fancy should have impressed him more deeply than any of the thousands that had succeeded, I could not divine. Then, why was his manner so different—calm and collected with everybody else, nervous and diffident with me? Vanity itself could not insinuate that there was anything in my person or manner especially calculated to captivate this Polypheme. The bare thought of being in the remotest degree associated, as it were, with the tremendous man, almost threw me into a fever. I resolved to leave the place the very next day.

The train to my destination not starting until the afternoon, I took advantage of this to bid farewell to a friend who lived in the next street; I paid my visit, and was again within a hundred yards of home, when a carriage, going at a foot pace, and attended by a crowd of several hundred men and boys, cheering something at the full pitch of their lungs, turned into the street.

I hate a crowd, and skipping up quickly on a door-step, stood well back to let the people pass. It was a fatal movement. As the mob swept by, a gigantic head became visible, peering from the carriage-window, which it exactly filled. It was *He*! His eye caught me in a moment. The immense table-land of his face was covered with a scarlet blush. He smiled, and kissed his hand: not ungracefully it must be owned, but still in such a manner as to induce his attentive escort to turn to see who could be the giant's particular friend! They probably expected another giant; there was a sort of derisive disappointed laugh, and—

"A cheer for madame!" squeaked a mischievous little urchin near me. It was given. On swept the procession, and I hardly knew what was passing till I found myself on the sofa, half fainting with shame and annoyance; nor could I regain my tranquillity of spirit till I was fairly on my road away.

The groves and gardens of the place of my destination had just put on the fresh green robes of spring, and I was in the full enjoyment of the change of scene and season, when I had the additional delight of meeting an old friend, who had arrived the previous day. She was on her road to England, and purposing to halt but

one day, made me promise to spend the whole of it with her: dining at the table d'hôte of her hotel, at which only a quiet party of some ten or twelve usually assembled.

Descending to the saloon at the usual summons, we found, to our utter surprise, not less than a hundred and twenty persons already seated; the board, in fact, seemed full. We had not thought it necessary to retain places, and were hesitating in what direction to move, when the landlord himself, accosting us with civil smiles, marshalled us to the upper end of the table. Here he had, as he informed us, reserved the two seats he judged to be most accordant with the wishes of mesdames.

Charmed with his politeness, we accepted the seats provided: thus filling up the only gap at the table, with the exception of the single place at the top, where stood a remarkably large chair, still unoccupied.

It seemed to us that an unusual air of hilarity pervaded the party. There was a kind of carnival look in the appointments of the room and table, and even the air and step of the nimble waiters announced of something beyond the common routine of festivity. The cheerfulness of the scene, joined to the presence of my old friend, raised my spirits to an unusual pitch; I was speculating gaily as to what manner of neighbour I should have on my left, when a sudden pause ensued in the clatter of plates and tongues, followed by an eager buzz. Every head was turned in our direction. Many of the gentlemen half rose, as if in respect, or curiosity; a group of waiters opened; there was a heavy step, a mighty black and white cloud—the GIANT was seated at my side!

How I felt when this fact established itself in my mind I will not seek to describe. I knew I must not faint, nor make a scene, nor even contrive a pretext to withdraw. In short, I flatter myself I acted on that trying occasion in a manner which, under other circumstances, would have obtained for me the character of a heroine.

To do the huge man justice, he behaved with all consideration. No gentleman could have demeaned himself—no ten gentlemen—of ordinary size—could have demeaned themselves—with more refined courtesy. His recognition was not so marked as to draw any especial attention to myself. He was far more collected than at our first meeting, and chatted in a lively tone with all who were within reach: particularly with my friend, who, far from evincing surprise or alarm, appeared delighted at the good fortune that had placed us in the immediate vicinity of the lion of the hour.

Upon what meats, or in what respective quantities the giant fed, I cannot say. I know that three chosen waiters, active powerful men, danced a perpetual reel about his chair, relieving each other in the administration of vast plates of something. Also, that before the close of that tremendous meal, a perfect little semicircle of bottles formed a *chevaux-de-frise* between us.

The dinner seemed interminable. I do not think I could have borne the situation five

minutes longer, when my friend rose. At the moment, the giant bent forward his enormous head, and whispered—*what* I know not. I was far too agitated to know. Enough that my retreat was effected. I was panting for air, and begged my friend to walk with me into one of the shady garden terraces, where, leaving me seated in a little trellised bower, she went back to the house to make some change in her dress.

No sooner had she quitted me than my spirits suddenly gave way. I burst into a violent flood of tears. I don't know if I have made it plain to the reader; but, to *me*, it was all too certain that I had by some strange fatality made an impression on the heart or fancy of this too susceptible monster. He did not want to eat me. On that score my mind was at rest. He was a kind monster and a gentle. But could anything be more unfortunate—more absurd? A creature whose presence, harmless as he was, filled me with fear and horror! Morbid as might be the antipathy, I could no more overcome it than I could have wrestled successfully with the giant himself. What was to be done? Nothing, but resume my flight, and keep my movements as secret as possible. "Oh, giant! giant!" I sobbed out audibly; "why—*why* is this—"

"This *what*?" said a voice close at hand. There was a loud rustle among the trees, a step that nearly shook down the arbour, the giant was kneeling before me! Even in that position his mighty head towered far above me. He caught my hand.

"Speak, speak, dearest; most generous of—
Eh! ha!"

I had fainted again.

In the course of that evening, I should say that nearly the entire population of the place informed themselves, either by direct inquiries at the hotel, or otherwise, that the English madame who had fainted while sitting with Monsieur O'Leary ("son prétendu") in the arbour, was as well as a slight fluttering of the nerves permitted. It was understood that the marriage would not take place until monsieur had fulfilled several important provincial engagements, when the young people would be united at Paris, and proceed at once to their residence, Castle O'Leary, Ballyshandra, Tipperary.

That night I made all needful preparations, bade adieu to my friend, and by noon next day was at our obscure little village, sixty miles off, and as remote from railway, or any other communication, as possible. Here, I drew free breath. I had bribed my postilions to conceal my route, I had ordered my letters to be forwarded in a different direction, and taken other precautions which could not fail to secure my object.

I was very happy in that forgotten little village. I had lodgings in a farm-house, and (barring industry) lived the life of its merry and contented inhabitants: rising at half-past four, dining at noon, and going to rest when the first bat began to circle round the thatched porch. The sweet summer fled away only too rapidly, but duties recalled me to the busy world, and,

now that all seemed safe, I had no excuse for lingering. I therefore bade farewell to my happy valley, and started for Paris, purporting to stop a day or two at St. B——, the town to which my letters had been addressed.

It was, I think, on the third evening of my stay, that the servant handed me a visiting card, adding that a gentleman was below, who earnestly entreated a few minutes' private conversation—

“Colonel Austin Dolmage,
87th Royal Irish,
Scallabogue.”

An Irishman! I had no acquaintance bearing that name. What could his visit mean? My heart began to palpitate; strange misgivings came upon me.

“What sort of a gentleman, Marie? Is—is he—he—tall?”

Not remarkably tall in Marie's opinion, but well-mannered, genteel, amiable.

“Alone, Marie? Did he desire to see me alone?”

Marie's belief was, that he made that request. She would fly and learn. Back she came breathless.

The colonel truly desired to see madame alone, but would not venture to make conditions. As madame pleased.

I directed Marie to show him up, and to remain—a sort of compromise, since Marie knew no word of English.

The gentleman who presented himself was all that Marie had described him: with the addition of a singularly frank and handsome countenance, and most winning smile. He looked, nevertheless, pale and anxious; and, in a somewhat hurried manner, began to apologise for his intrusion:

“It is,” he went on, “a matter so delicate, that nothing short of the painful and urgent circumstances of the case could have induced me to accept a mission, which (first earnestly bespeaking your kind indulgence) I will unfold as briefly as possible. You have been, I think, within these few months at M——?”

I bowed.

“And there became acquainted with a—a gentleman—whose unusual stature may possibly, independent of other reasons, suffice to recal him to your recollection?”

My lips faltered a faint admission that the little peculiarity referred to, had *not* wholly escaped me.

“Dermot O'Leary is a connexion of mine—and—” Colonel Dolmage added, with some emotion, “my most intimate and confidential friend.”

Even at that agitated moment it occurred to me that the selection was inconvenient: since, unless the giant sat down, or his friend mounted a table, there could be little interchange of “confidence.”

“He is dangerously ill—reduced, by several weeks' severe sickness, to a degree of prostration, from which his medical advisers deem it impossible he can recover. Poor Dermot is greatly beloved by us at home, and, hearing of his sad condition, I obtained leave of absence, and hurried hither. Now, my dear madam,

comes the most difficult part of my embassy. My poor friend, whose nature is most susceptible, and responds readily, almost *too* readily, to the slightest demonstration of interest, touched to the heart by some expression of yours, conceived a strong attachment to the kind speaker. The discovery he subsequently made, or fancied he made, that your affections were already engaged, brought on his fatal illness. He is dying, but hearing that you had followed him hither—”

“Followed, sir? Allow me to assure you that to you alone am I indebted for the information that the g——that Mr. O'Leary—is here.”

The colonel looked surprised, but bowed politely:

“At all events, he is aware of your arrival in this rather out-of-the-way spot, and, to be brief, adjured me by every tie of friendship to seek you out, and entreat you to vouchsafe him one minute's interview. He has that to say to you which may materially affect your future happiness. Permit me, my dear madam,” concluded the colonel, “to add my petition to that of my generous-hearted cousin; let me hope that you will not refuse this solace to his dying hour.”

What could I say? For an instant I tried to frame some form of refusal, but speak it I could not. Go I must. A few minutes found me actually on my way to the giant's lodging, leaning on Colonel Dolmage's arm, and attended by Marie.

My heart throbbed almost audibly as I ascended the stair, and I was glad to sit down for a moment in the ante-chamber, while the colonel went to announce my arrival to his friend.

He returned on tiptoe; in the way in which men usually walk in a sick-room, to the great derangement of invalid nerves.

“He wanders a little. Don't be alarmed; he is too weak to speak above a whisper, and can with difficulty move hand or foot. He is a little flighty; but on the *one* subject I think you will find him perfectly clear. Shall we go in?”

I trembled in every joint as I approached the four beds which, placed together, formed a sufficient cot for the poor giant. Alas! how changed! All my fears, all my old antipathies, were at once swallowed up in a sense of profound pity for the noble form, now reduced to a wreck with which a child might cope. The large sunken eyes turned on me with a look of gratitude I shall never forget. His lips moved; he beckoned me to the bedside. The colonel stood opposite.

Then, with all his remaining strength, the giant took my hand in one of his, and with the other clasped his friend's. He signed to me to put down my head. I obeyed, listening eagerly.

“I—know—your—secret,” faltered the poor giant; “take—my—b—blessing.”

To my inexpressible amazement, he then joined my hand with that of Colonel Dolmage, and, exhausted with the effort, sank back unconscious on the pillow.

The colonel coloured, and bit his lip, hardly able to repress a smile.

"I was not prepared for *this* part of the hallucination," he said, hurriedly. "You will acquit me of any participation. Good Heaven! I fear he is gone."

It was not so; the invalid had only sunk into an exhausted slumber—a state which, in his case, as in some others, proved to be the precursor of a favourable change.

From the moment when his poor disordered brain pictured that he had secured my happiness, and that of his friend, he began to rally. It is true that, as reason regained her sway, he became fully sensible of his little mistake; it could not, however, be recalled, nor was it so embarrassing as might be imagined.

I know not how it came about—whether from the community of interest engendered in the sick-room, or how far the noble-hearted giant himself contributed to the result—but my acquaintance with Colonel Dolmage, so oddly commenced, ripened into mutual regard and esteem. In fact, about six months after the scene above described, our hands were a second time united: this time with the Church's blessing in addition to that of Mr. O'Leary. We were married at the chapel of the British embassy in Paris. A French journal, reporting the occurrence, remarked as a singular feature that the monsieur who assisted as groomsmen, had two metres fifty-five millimetres of height.

Years after that happy day, I was sitting in my pretty Irish garden, with my tall cousin, of whom I had long since lost all fear, when it came into my head to ask him on what possible word of mine he had based his early impression that I had conceived an especial personal interest in him?

He spoke of my embarrassment, my blushes. &c. &c.

"But the *word*, cousin, the word. The mysterious 'expression' of which Austin spoke?"

"Well, do you recollect my asking you what moved you thus keenly? And do you remember what you replied?"

"Perfectly: 'Your size.'"

"Good; you are answered."

"Am I?"

I pondered for a moment; then I asked:

"Cousin, how would you *spell* 'size'?"

"How? S—i—g—h—s."

"No, no, my dear cousin; S—i—z—e. It makes all the difference."

"A very considerable difference," said my companion, rather thoughtfully. "To be sure. *Size*."

FANCIFUL INSANITY.

SEVERAL classifications have been suggested of the varieties which madness assumes, but the present notes are confined to that ideal or fanciful insanity exhibiting vivacity of imagination, when the brain is filled with strange and whimsical conceits.

An educated man, whose mind had a philosophic turn, believed that the entire surface of the globe was formed of thin glass,

beneath which he perceived and traced serpents of all sizes without number. He trembled and feared to tread on the brittle expanse, lest it should break and he should fall through and be devoured by the monsters he saw beneath. Another man of letters fancied that his legs were made of glass, and that they would inevitably break if he rose from his bed and stood upon them. A poet of Amsterdam carried the notion further, for he absolutely could not be induced to sit down—under an apprehension that his brittle and transparent foundation, if it touched a chair, would be shivered to atoms. A once eminent painter remained a whole winter in bed, imagining that his bones were as soft and flexible as wax, and that if he attempted to stand upon them they would give way under his weight, and his body would sink down into a misshapen mass. Others have fancied themselves made of butter, and have been fearfully apprehensive of melting away. Mr. Haslam mentions the case of a man of letters who, in addition to wearing a thick flannel night-cap, always slept with his head in a tin saucepan, in order, as he said, to exclude the intrusions of the *sprites*. The feature in the human face which has occasioned most uneasiness in the minds of madmen has been the nose. One man believed that his nose had grown to such a size, that he was afraid of stirring out of doors, or of being seen in the streets, lest people should tread on it as they passed him by. Another imagined that his nasal organ dangled from his face like the proboscis of an elephant, and that it was constantly so much in his way at dinner, that he could not prevent it from dipping into and floating in the dishes. We read of a man who not only saw but felt, a pair of stag's antlers growing from his forehead; and of persons of both sexes who fancied themselves grains of wheat, and were in constant apprehension of being gobbled up by fowls. In an Irish lunatic asylum there were, not long ago, three patients whose insanity assumed a most whimsical turn. One was persuaded he was an umbrella, and would remain for hours lying up against the wall in a corner of his apartment. Another fancied he was a clock, and would repeat the tick and the motion of the pendulum until nature was exhausted. The third patient believed he was a hen, engaged in the process of incubation, and used to remain for hours squatting over imaginary eggs. The quiet perseverance of this poor lunatic had something so indescribably earnest about it, as almost to neutralise the ludicrous effect of the prolonged and barren process in which days and months were consumed.

A patient from Berkshire, in Bethlehem Hospital, felt convinced that he had been hatched at his father's door by the sun, and that he had commenced his existence as a *flea*, but had been, when two years old, metamorphosed into a boy. Another believed that he was Atlas, carrying the world on his back; and always expressed intense alarm lest it should fall and crush, not only himself but all mankind. Baron Larrey re-

lates an instance where the imagination realised the fiction of Swift in Gulliver's travel to Brobdingnag, by magnifying to the eye ordinary men to the stature and dimensions of giants. The ear, too, by which we receive impressions of "the airy tongues that syllable men's names," has been an endless organ of delusions, in sounds musical as well as inharmonious. While some men have believed themselves endowed with the power of flying like birds through the air, others have fancied that they possessed the faculty of hanging in a state of suspended animation, like bats. Many have imagined themselves transmuted into wolves, dogs, cats, gamecocks, cuckoos, pipkins, and teapots. To this strange fancy, Pope thus alludes in describing the Cave of Spleen, in the Rape of the Lock :

Unnumbered things on either side are seen,
Of bodies changed to various forms by spleen,
Here living teapots stand, one arm held out,
One bent—the handle this, and that the spout.
A pipkin there, like Homer's tripod walks,
Here sighs a jar, and there a goose-pie talks.

In a note on this passage, Bishop Warburton states as a fact that an English lady of distinction actually fancied herself a goose-pie. Strange as these phantasies are, they are scarcely more remarkable than the effects insanity produces upon the sensation and nerves. It would seem sometimes to deprive its victim of the sense of cold, for it is common for a lunatic to tear off all his clothes, the want of which he scarcely seems to feel. It has also been found apparently to deaden, and even extinguish, all sensations of pain. There have been cases in which the coldest bodies have been described as feeling intensely hot, so that the impression of burning would seem to follow from the slightest touch. M. Marc describes a man who for many years had been in the habit of licking the bare walls of the apartment in which he lived, until he had actually worn away the plaster. The man himself accounted for this singular freak, by declaring that he had been tasting and smelling the most delicious and fragrant fruit.

Fanciful insanity, in its vivid succession of images, its rapid capacity of invention, and its aptitude to catch striking associations, occasionally presents some of the attributes of genius. Under its singular impulses, the naturally ingenious and acute have sometimes become astronomers without instruction, philosophers without thought, and poets by immediate inspiration. Amongst the ancients, monomaniacs frequently appeared as prophets and sibyls; and in the dark ages as wizards and witches, demoniacs and vampires. Men have, before now, gloried in assuming the attributes of Satan—"accursed of God and man." Fear has constantly been the parent of insanity. During the reign of terror, many people fancied they had been guillotined, and had acquired new heads: either by the special gift of Providence, or by exchange with others who had been decapitated like themselves. To a ludicrous instance of this nature, Tom Moore alludes in his "Fudge Family in Paris:"

Went to the madhouse, saw the man,
Who thinks, poor wretch, that when the Fiend
Of discord here, full riot ran,
He like the rest was guillotined.
But that when under Boney's reign
(A more discreet though quite as strong one),
The heads were all restored again,
He in the scramble got a *wrong one*!
Accordingly he still cries out,
This strange head fits him most unpleasantly;
And always runs, poor devil, about,
Inquiring for his own incessantly.

In modern times we have had self-asserted royal pretenders and royal personages victims of vain or self-important insanity, who, carrying straws in their hands, fancied that they were sceptres, and that they swayed the world. These cases have appeared in great numbers. When Louis the Sixteenth was beheaded, the hospitals of Paris were crowded with Dauphins destined to succeed him on the throne; and the mournful fate of the Duc D'Enghien immediately produced many aspiring impersonators. The military successes of Napoleon the First, stimulated ambitious insanity in many men who had been his soldiers. These, in their cells at the Bicêtre, proclaimed themselves emperors.

It is certain that in America, and it is but too probable that in England, the lunatic asylums contain many unfortunate persons labouring under delusions produced by overwrought credulity, and the errant flights of an ill-regulated fancy, misguided by "spirit media," professional and amateur, honest and dishonest. It may be worth consideration at this time, whether it is not quite as rational in a man to believe himself made of glass, or to be firmly convinced of his having assumed the shape and substance of a pipkin, or a teapot, or a goose-pie, as to derive his convictions of the immortality of the soul from wretchedly indifferent juggling under a table and cover in a dark room; or, to believe that the spirits of the departed and beloved who have passed through the awful change that wrung the hearts of us, the bereaved survivors, when we looked upon it in its terrible solemnity, can be recalled out of eternity, at so much a head, by Showmen.

OUT OF THE HOUSE OF BONDAGE.

My mother died soon after I was born, and I was petted by my father until the age of eight, when I was sent to Canada for my education. I remained under the care of a kind family at Quebec until I had attained the age of sixteen, when my father called me home to keep house for him, as he was very lonely, and his health was giving way.

My father had desired that I should be taught by the best masters that could be obtained, and no expense was to be spared in my education.

I had lived a happy life in Canada, and Mrs. Summers, the lady under whose care I had been placed, loved me, I really believe, almost as well as she did her own daughter. She was most unwilling to part with me, and sought to

retain me for another year; but my father was inexorable, and home I had to go.

"My dear," said she, as we parted, "when your father placed you under my care, he knew what my sentiments were with regard to slavery—that I was opposed to the whole system, and that I looked with contempt on that feeling of abhorrence which is generally entertained, even in the free states, for all persons of negro descent. If your father had objected to the free expression of my opinions, I could not have undertaken your tuition. I have earnestly endeavoured to imbue you with my own feelings on this question of humanity and justice, and I look to you to do all that may lie in your power to mitigate the horrors of the system, and raise the character of those unfortunate beings whom your father owns: so that, if it shall please God to grant you the glorious privilege of emancipating any of your fellow-creatures, you may have the satisfaction of feeling that you have conferred freedom on persons who are really capable of benefiting by its blessings."

She promised that her thoughts and prayers should be with me in my holy labour.

I was only sixteen when I went to my father's to live, in a very hot-bed of slavery. If I had been older, perhaps I might have withstood for a longer time the force of example and custom. I say *perhaps*, for I have known men and women coming out from free England, resisting the system of the lash for a certain time, and then gradually succumbing to its use. I have known even ladies of good education use the cowhide until the feminine softness of the eye was changed to a tyrannical hardness.

But I did for a time strive to do some good, beginning with those placed immediately under me. I did this, too, under great discouragement; for my father, at the very first when he welcomed me home, told me with stern decision that I must at once forget all the sentimental trash I had learnt in the North. I ventured timidly to put in a word about kindness.

"Kindness, my girl? I feed my niggers well, and clothe them well, don't overwork them, nurse them when they are sick or old; but, if I were to rule with what you call kindness instead of cowhide, I should be a ruined man in three months."

The slaves about us were dreadfully demoralised. My kindness—for I did begin by being excessively kind and indulgent—was mistaken for weakness. I was laughed at. The work of the house was wretchedly attended to. Then my father interfered; his remedy was effectual, and everything went well with the lash.

I became weary and disheartened, but I had still one great hope in which I firmly trusted: an appeal to reason and affection. Surely, I thought, with human beings, however low, there must be a response to such an appeal, that response being the proof of their humanity. The very strength of my conviction in this matter led to error. I made my attempt with great earnestness and resolution, and signally failed. To mention one instance—there was a girl spe-

cially appointed to wait on me. I devoted hours of labour to the task of developing a better nature in her soul, but it was all in vain. My shallow vanity led me to believe that what I had done was remedy enough for all her defects of a moral growth, for all her dwarfing from the cradle, and in consequence of my failure I gradually adopted the creed that men and women with African blood in their veins belonged to a lower humanity; that there was a great gulf fixed between their nature and mine; that we were not equals in the sight of God.

I succeeded in making myself feared, and all things then, to my father's great satisfaction, apparently went well in the house; but, looking back now, I can see how terribly my own nature was affected. All those valuable qualities of patience, of forbearance, of restraint on sudden impulse, which ought to govern our dealings with those round about us, were destroyed. My will must never be thwarted for a moment. I grew to be quickly incensed at the slightest opposition. In my way I was kind, just as my father was kind—kind, as people are kind to lower animals.

My father praised me for the excellent manner in which the household arrangements were now conducted.

"I let you come round of yourself to common sense, my dear," he said, with a smile. "I knew six months would teach you the proper kindness for niggers."

At this period, to strengthen me still further in my impious creed, came my introduction to my cousin, Abel Duncan.

I had observed from my window a stranger arrive at the house—on business with my father, I supposed—and went on with what I was about. After some time I was attracted by loud talking in my father's business-room; it was evident that an angry discussion was taking place. In fear lest something serious might occur, I ventured to knock at the door, on pretence of asking a question about household affairs. From the few words which caught my ears, the dispute appeared to be about money matters, and I could see that my father was in a towering passion. My presence, however, seemed to cast a sudden restraint upon him.

"Clara!" he exclaimed, "here's your cousin Abel I've so often told you about; go, and kiss him, and say how pleased you are to see him—your only cousin, recollect."

I went towards him at my father's bidding, but my cousin seemed to shrink away from me. I attributed this, at the time, to bashfulness.

"Abel!" exclaimed my father, in a passionate voice. And then my cousin came forward and gave me a kiss, but the kiss seemed to hiss through his lips.

"Your cousin Abel comes from the North," said my father; "so you two can worship the niggers together."

"Uncle knows how I worship them," laughed Abel. "That story goes down in the North, that both we and the Britishers would cry out loud enough for cowhide, if the cotton supply stopped."

"Ah!" retorted my father, "leave us to do the dirty work, all the flogging and that sort, hey? And then finger the cotton yourselves with clean hands?"

I felt that this badinage was directed against my old sentiments, and I protested that I had learnt, at least, how to treat niggers.

"Ah, ha!" laughed Abel. "Cowhide for ever!"

There was something vindictive in his voice and in the gleam of his eye, which jarred me through and through.

In the progress of our acquaintance I could see, as regarded myself, notwithstanding the outward respect he showed me, that he entertained no real sympathy, but rather a feeling of repugnance. I could detect, moreover, a certain falseness of manner in his intercourse with my father, couched under an apparently frank and outspoken demeanour; still, there was nothing sufficiently tangible for me to take notice of, and he had succeeded in strongly prepossessing my father in his favour.

Abel and I were naturally thrown a great deal together, and though I could not help disliking him, there was one sad cause which gave him a certain power of fascination over me. There were certain times when the good teaching I had received from Mrs. Summers would, defying all my efforts to strangle the thoughts, start up in judgment against me—times, perhaps, when my temper had been more particularly ruffled, and I had sent a slave to the overseer for chastisement. Then, when a distant cry of anguish broke upon my ear, the doubt would come. I would sugar it over as best I might: the girl had shamefully neglected my orders; had been disobedient, lazy, and wilfully perverse; it was not difficult to square the doubt with reasons; but still the doubt remained. What if it were really true, that this was a human being created as myself in the image of God, and that this act of mine was adding still further to her debasement, destroying that work of His, and levelling her to the condition of the brute?

Abel was always ready enough to answer my doubt, and afford me fresh faith in my new creed. With blasphemous perversion he would point to the Bible itself in confirmation of all he asserted as to the inferiority of the African race; he would say that they bore the wrath of God stamped in the very form of the forehead; that they were destined to be hewers of wood and drawers of water, to the end of time; that their mental capacity was so low that they could only be ruled by fear. His illustrations and arguments appeared reasonable, and I was only too ready to admit all he advanced.

I recollect with what diabolical ingenuity he used to compare the drop of black blood, to insanity lurking in the frame. He would admit that persons of mixed race might be good enough, up to a certain extent, and for a certain period; but, like insanity, the black fibre would be certain, sooner or later, to work to the surface, and then the whole moral nature would be thrown out of balance. He would quote in-

stances of men ruined body and soul by Quadroon women, with their fair faces and devilish hearts—yes, men even, whom he had known, who had lost fortune and respectable position, and life itself.

I fear his words found a readier response in an under-current of pride which caused me to rejoice in my own exaltation above the debased race. Looking back, however, to my feelings at that period, I think it was owing rather to Abel's frequent reiteration of his opinions, than to any logical considerations of my own, that I came to acquiesce in the principle which he so strongly asserted. Abel Duncan had effectually poisoned my soul.

My father was not on terms of intimacy with any of the families in the neighbourhood, and, with the exception of one or two old bachelor friends whose estates were close to ours, we received scarcely any visitors. My father told me that the coolness which had arisen with his neighbours was occasioned by some questions of property, which made it impossible for him to make any advances towards reconciliation; and, though he regretted that he could not then afford me that social intercourse which was so fitting for my age, yet the matter was of less consequence, as he intended within a year or two to realise his property and proceed to Europe, where I should enjoy all the pleasures and amusements of society.

It chanced that an English doctor, a widower with an only daughter, came to settle in our neighbourhood. There was some difficulty in finding a house suitable for Dr. Evans, and my father, who was very hospitable, insisted on their taking up their residence with us until they could be comfortably settled. Mary Evans was about my own age, and we soon became great friends. Her affection for me was increased by my nursing her through a severe fever which she caught while staying at our house. She often declared that neither her father nor herself could ever repay me for my attention and devotion.

One day, when she was convalescent, we were sitting together under the verandah. It chanced that we fell to talking on the question of slavery, which up to that time had never been alluded to between us. I imagined what her sentiments would be, as she had so recently left England, and I begged her to speak without reserve to me; but I cautioned her that it would be prudent, in a general way, to suppress anti-slavery opinions.

In the warmth of our ensuing argument, I had not perceived that Abel was standing by us, listening.

I shuddered as I caught his hateful smile, and felt a dread at his knowing how entirely I was a convert to his opinions.

"Abel," said I, "you will explain this matter to Miss Evans better than I can."

"No, no," he answered, with a sneer; "you understand it perfectly."

"It's too terrible for belief!" exclaimed Mary Evans. "Why, Clara tells me that one drop of

black blood could destroy her very nature. I know her love and goodness, and I won't believe it."

"It's the opinion generally entertained, North as well as South," replied Abel.

Mary turned earnestly to me, and prayed me to discard the horrible theory. I had been good and kind to her, she said, and she loved me so much that she could not bear to know of a thought like this having a place in my mind.

I could not deny my convictions, and the subject was at last dropped; but I felt that I had destroyed the bond of sympathy which until then existed between us.

I don't think that I have mentioned the extreme indulgence and tenderness which my father showed towards me. My smallest wishes and fancies were immediately gratified, and the only return he seemed to desire was my company and my presence near him. He delighted in my singing and playing, overwhelming me with praise, and always holding out as his reward a speedy journey to Europe, and a happy life in the old world.

All this time I became more and more tyrannical, unreasonable, and petulant, in my intercourse with the slaves. One evening my temper was roused by one of the girls in the house being more than usually careless and inattentive. In my anger I struck her. She was much fairer than any other of our slaves, and consequently by far the most troublesome of all.

To my amazement she muttered a few words in an under tone. These words drove me frantic, but I mastered my feeling of indignation. When I recovered myself, I told her she should be severely punished for the insult she had shown me, and in the greatest anger hurried down to my father. He and Abel were smoking together under the verandah. He perceived how greatly I was moved, and drawing me towards him, bade me tell him my grievance. It was disgusting and painful to me even to whisper the girl's words in his ear.

Yet, indignant and angry as I was, I felt terrified by the excess of my father's rage.

"It shall be flogged out of her," he exclaimed, "if the punishment goes within an inch of her life. And all the niggers on the plantation shall see it done."

It haunts my conscience to this day that I did not fall on my knees and ask my father to spare the girl. Her prayer for mercy rings in my ears even now. You will marvel, notwithstanding the greatness of my anger, that I could allow a human being to suffer extreme pain for the purpose of appeasing my wounded feelings; you will naturally think that I was dead to every generous and noble impulse. Yet you must remember that I had just nursed Mary Evans, who was a comparative stranger to me, at the peril of my own life.

Abel had followed my father out, when the girl was dragged away. He returned in about half an hour. "Clara," said he, "we've taught her not to say your mother was a slave, and she won't forget the lesson in a hurry."

The tone in which he uttered this, nettled me. "Abel!" I exclaimed, "good taste might have prevented you from paining me by a repetition of her words."

He offered me a very elaborate apology; but I could see that a sneer remained on his lips.

I turned from him, and in my agitation I drew from my bosom the miniature-locket I was accustomed to wear, and bursting into tears, I exclaimed, "My dear fair beautiful mother to be called a slave!"

"What's that?" cried Abel. "My aunt's portrait? How did you get it?"

I said I had discovered it one day in my father's desk. I had begged him as a great favour to let me have it for my mother's sake. He had refused his consent for a long time. At last I had teased him into compliance.

My father entered the room. I tried to get the locket away from Abel; but he held it tight, on pretence of examining it carefully.

"Clara!" exclaimed my father, "you promised me faithfully never to show that portrait to any one."

"But only Abel, papa," I pleaded.

He said that he had expressed a strong wish on the subject—that I had broken my promise—and he ordered me instantly to restore the locket.

I had been so accustomed to have my own way, playing and trifling with any wishes of his that thwarted mine, and always succeeding in wheedling him in the end, that I refused to give up the miniature. I ought to have perceived how irritated the events of the night had made him. He stepped forward, and, seizing my hand, wrenched the locket from me; then, in his anger at my opposition, he struck me a blow with a switch he held in his hand.

The pain was scarcely anything; it was the indignity—and Abel standing by with a smile of triumph! I wanted to say something, but I was absolutely choked. If Abel had not seen the blow, I think even on the instant I could have humbled myself, and forgiven my father, and asked his forgiveness. But to stoop before my cousin! I left the room with proud defiance, and hurrying to my own room, locked the door, and threw myself on the bed. After the lapse of half an hour, I heard a gentle tap at the door, and my name pronounced with tenderness. It was my father's voice. I felt that he wanted to be reconciled with me. I would have given worlds to have opened the door and kissed him; but my wretched pride, which told me I must resent the blow to uphold my dignity in Abel's eyes, held me still.

Next morning I felt my father was longing for reconciliation, but my thought of Abel's triumph caused me to be cold and sullen.

It was strange that the man I so detested should have stood thus between my father's heart and mine. My feelings, too, at that time were greatly excited against Abel by reports of his conduct with one of the women on the plantation. Far above my strongest sense of morality was contempt for his degradation, and

I could not endure the thought of being humbled in the presence of a man I so heartily despised. I little knew how Abel was taking advantage of my conduct towards my father to work out his own wicked purpose.

At length I was ashamed of my wilful perversity, and eagerly courted a reconciliation; then, to my sorrow, I was met with coldness instead of the warmth I had expected, and I gradually found, to my amazement, that my father's heart had changed towards me.

Though I was mortified, yet when I thought over the whole matter in quiet moments, I blamed my own conduct. It almost seemed as if there must be some inherent defect in my nature.

There were certain little matters connected with our mode of life which had always struck me as being odd; they had relation chiefly to my father's little intercourse with his neighbours. In my morbid condition, I could not help thinking these things over; and the more I thought of them, the less satisfactory had the explanations I had been used to receive from my father appeared. I strove to reconcile these anomalies, but racking my brains to the utmost, could only find one reason which would make the whole matter plain and consistent. That reason was frightful, but it was so manifestly impossible that I was able to laugh it away. "Stupid fancy!" I exclaimed, gazing in the glass, and gladly gathering from my own features a resemblance to the features in the miniature. Still, at certain times, the fancy came again; and more particularly when any question arose as to my going into society.

The frightful thought was aroused one day by my father's objecting to my going to a public ball at which I had heard Mary Evans was to be present. My wishes on the subject were met with the same inadequate objections. I had been spending the day with Mary Evans, and, to my surprise, she had made no allusion to the ball. We were sitting together in the evening, and I held her hand against mine, trying, as I told her, to discover whose was the smaller. It was natural, born as I was in the South, that my complexion should be less fair than hers, yet my hand was but little darker. I alluded casually to the ball, saying that I had a great wish to be present at it with her, and then from her lips came the same excuses, spoken with hesitation and confusion. I grasped her hand again, gazing on the two hands with deep anxiety. The comparison reassured me; the haunting idea I felt to be the mere creation of my own morbid fancy; and the words I said then to Mary Evans were said in very mockery of my fears. "You won't take me to the ball because of the negro blood in my veins."

I expected a laughing answer. I trembled when I saw the deep compassion expressed in her face. "Alas! who has broken the secret to you?" she asked, sorrowfully. I could not speak, I could not tell her that it was she who in those words had revealed the fearful truth.

My senses seemed numbed. I was barely con-

scious that she assured me of her love, covered my face with her kisses, and prayed me to kiss her. My heart felt like stone. Her very love itself was loathsome in the thought of its compassion, and my lips were set in rigid coldness. A frightful gulf seemed fixed between us which no human love could bridge. I asked her to summon our carriage—to let me get home. Ah, that fearful ride! Abel had been also at the Evanses, and he was to return with me. I would have given anything to have been alone, but I was already in the carriage before he got in, and I seemed to have lost all power of will, and all womanly dignity.

Abel sat at my side without speaking a word, but I was sure he knew that I had learnt the secret of my birth. Then I knew why it was that on our first meeting he had disliked to kiss me as his cousin, why all his manner towards me had appeared so false, why he had taken so much pleasure in proclaiming the degradation of the negro race. He sat quite silent, but I could read his thoughts. I who had deemed myself his lawful cousin, his equal by right of birth, his superior in every gift of soul, so that if, as the only child of a rich planter, he should have the presumption to make me an offer of marriage, I had resolved to spurn him away with contempt—I shuddered and crouched away from him—I knew that in his vile thoughts he held me no higher than that wretched girl he had abused. He pray me to be his wife! The very laws forbade my being the Christian wife of any white man! His contemptuous silence awed me; he sat perfectly still, letting me sink to the floor of the carriage.

The daughter of a slave! That dreadful idea turned the current of my thoughts from Abel, and the blow my father had struck me burnt anew, like fire; but that girl who had suffered the torture of the lash for my sake! The recollection of that night flashed into my soul, crushing me with an overwhelming remorse. Her nature was the same as mine; there was the same dark blood in our veins; the same capacity for moral elevation, the same capacity for pain, God forgive me! My crime struck home.

I resolved to see the girl before entering the house. Her forgiveness would, I felt, ease the load on my heart.

"I found my way in the dark, as well as I could, to the negro huts, and discovered where she was being nursed. She was lying asleep on a mat, but the old woman who attended on her had not gone to bed.

"Is she nearly recovered?"

"She is."

"Was the punishment very severe?"

I felt the utmost anguish at the woman's answer.

No one had been so severely flogged on the plantation, for years!

I sank on my knees at the girl's side. By this time she had awoke. I poured forth my words of contrition, and my scalding tears fell on her hand which I grasped in mine. She was partly dazed with sleep, but both she and the

old woman gazed on me with astonishment. My behaviour was so utterly incomprehensible to them. To ask pardon of a slave was an idea beyond the limit of their thoughts. And even then as I knelt there, with the sense of my own wickedness full upon me, I could scarcely bring myself to believe that I was praying forgiveness of a being who partook to the full of my own humanity!

It was only when I told the girl I had discovered that she had spoken the truth—that I knew that I *was* the daughter of a slave—it was only then that their senses were aroused; fear was strongly visible on their countenances; the girl started forward and vehemently contradicted me. No, no! I was Mrs. Duncan's child, she cried, and the perspiration stood out on her brow; she piteously implored me to leave her, lest she should be again punished, owing to my having come to the hut.

I assured them both, again and again, that they had no occasion for fear, in speaking about the truth. The old woman then told me that before I was brought home, my father had given the strictest injunctions, enforced with stern threats, to everybody on the plantation, that not a word should ever be breathed to me concerning my birth; and that it was to show his determination in the matter that he had made such a severe example of the poor girl.

Stronger even than my bitter feelings of remorse for the suffering I had caused, was the anxious desire which possessed me to hear the account of my real mother—my own mother, notwithstanding her misery and degradation and shame. At first the old woman would not speak. I swore not to reveal a word of her statement; in my passionate eagerness, I threatened, coaxed, bribed her. At last I forced the story bit by bit from her most unwilling tongue.

She had nursed my mother when she died, and had nursed me when I was born. To the best of her recollection, my mother had died where the girl was then lying before my eyes, and I too had been born in that very hut.

"How did she die?" I inquired eagerly. And then I became so nervously fearful lest she should in any degree conceal the truth from me, that by force of old habit I threatened her with the most severe chastisement if I should ever find that she had deceived me one iota.

But my hasty threat brought punishment on my own head, for when I repeated my question, the woman looked significantly towards the girl. Then came the frightful conviction that my mother herself had suffered the very pain I had so often been the means of inflicting. On my knees I prayed the old woman's forgiveness for my threat, and I poured all the money I had in my purse, into her lap.

My mother died of a broken heart, the woman said. She had been sold away from her children. As far as I could understand the account, she had at first been treated with degrading kindness and indulgence, but nothing could drive a cloud of past love from her brow, and in spite of her beauty she grew wearisome.

"But when I was born?" I asked anxiously. "Was she happier then—did she forget the past a little, in her love for me?"

In the woman's answer a curse seemed to fall on my head. I had never been blessed with a mother's smile. I had been nursed with hatred on her bosom; my very life had been saved out of her hands! And so she had lain down to die, lying where that beaten girl was then lying. I kissed the girl in pity for her sufferings; my tears fell wet upon her face; but every kiss seemed to bring me nearer to my dead mother, and to all her sorrow and all her shame.

If I had been left to myself I should not have returned home that night, but the old woman, partly by force, partly by persuasion, led me up to the entrance of the house.

I could not endure the thought of meeting my father, and I stole on tiptoe past the room where he and Abel were sitting. My father must have seen the conflict of that night written on my face when he met me the next morning. I believe his heart was moved with pity, for he came forward to kiss me; but I involuntarily shrank from him before his lips touched mine. An irresistible influence seemed to drag me away.

He called me to him, but I had no power to move.

Then his indignation was excited; he upbraided me for my ingratitude; true, I had discovered the secret of my birth, though he had done all in his power to hide it from me; but yet the knowledge of my origin ought only to have increased my affection and gratitude. He reminded me that I had been treated as the daughter of the house, though my mother was a slave. All that education could do, had been done for me; but he feared it was only too true that there was some radical perversion in natures such as mine, which unfitted them for love.

O! It was intolerable anguish to hear such words from his lips, and to feel, as I did then feel, that they were true.

He finally told me with great sternness that although I was free, free beyond all question or doubt, yet my future destiny depended on my own behaviour. Whether I gave him my heart or not—he had once looked for a daughter to solace his old age, but that hope was gone—he would at least have a return for the money spent upon me. I should amuse him, read and play to him as heretofore, and arrange the household affairs; I should suffer for it if I failed.

Abel entirely usurped my place in my father's heart. The affection and indulgence which had been mine, were lavished upon him. I had stood between him and his hope, as nearest lawful heir, of inheriting my father's wealth; there was no longer any danger that I should spoil his prospects.

He still kept up the show of treating me with great outward respect: taking care, however, that the crushing thought of my degradation

should be continually before me; for he well knew that thought to be the main cause of my estrangement from my father.

There was no one to support me through this heavy trial. Mary Evans, indeed, was true; she would twine her arms round me, drawing me affectionately to her bosom, protesting an eternal friendship; yet I felt at those times more than ever, my isolation. Her nature was not my nature; the drop of dark blood and the iron hand of the law, had decreed our separation; her pity might be as great and as good as the pity of an angel; but it could not afford that blessed consolation which arises from the possession of a common nature liable to the same trials and the same sufferings.

Do not imagine that this was merely a morbid fancy of mine; its truth was too evident in the ordinary intercourse of life. When Mary Evans and Abel and I were sitting together, and he talked in a bantering tone of some friends of his who had fallen in love with us, his words amounted to no more than familiar badinage, to which the laughing retort of Mary Evans formed, on her part, a fitting answer. But those same words addressed to me were laden with unutterable shame, bringing a burning blush to my cheeks.

But the lash—ah me! the day of retribution had come. While I was yet responsible for all household matters, the ability to command had left me, and the slaves knew it, as the horse knows an unskilful rider. I dared not punish. The thought of my own mother, and the knowledge that I was ordering a creature of like nature with myself to be lashed, tied my tongue and held my hand. Things were often neglected, and my father would receive no excuses for any short-comings he discovered. I had the means of punishment, he said, and he would summon the overseer, and force me to give the order for punishment. Sometimes in his irritation at what he termed my stupid "nigger-worship," he would strike me, even in the presence of Aleb, with his switch.

There was a clergyman, a Mr. Graham, a neighbour of ours, who occasionally visited at our house. He was an old man, towards whom I entertained the strongest feelings of respect and veneration; it was impossible not to be attracted by the tenderness of his manner, and by the strong but unobtrusive piety which marked his demeanour. When I tell you that he held slaves, you will in all probability smile at the thought of his tenderness, and utterly deny his piety. Yet he was not a hypocrite. I will mention, by way of illustration, that memorable instance of the great leader of the Evangelical party in past days—the pious John Newton, of Olney, successor of Whitfield, and intimate friend of Cowper. Well, he was in his earlier days a slave-trader, the master of a slave ship. On board his vessel, as I have read, the negroes were packed together like herrings, stifled, sick, and broken-hearted. But, separated by a single plank from his victims, the voice of their jailer might be heard, day by day, conducting the

prayers of his ship's company, and joining them in singing devout compositions of his own. He experienced on his last voyage to Guinea—these are his own words—"sweeter and more frequent hours of Divine communion" than he had ever elsewhere known. Even in his old age, long after he had entered the Church, holding a conspicuous position as a Christian minister, honoured and revered by a large congregation, he coldly and phlegmatically avowed his participation in the slave trade; and to the last he was little conscious of the heinousness of his guilt.

Mr. Graham would have resisted as indignantly any assertion that the negroes are the intellectual and moral equals of the white race, as he would have opposed the theory that mankind at large have been developed from monkeys.

Yet it was impossible for him to be harsh or severe to any living creature. No trouble was too great, if he could only alleviate pain and suffering wherever they might exist. When any slave chanced to be ill, he would watch with the utmost solicitude at the bedside, speaking the kindest words, and noting every change which took place in the patient. An ordinary observer would have marvelled at such devotion, and would have felt the greatest admiration for such conduct on the part of a man towards his poorer fellows; but Mr. Graham never for a moment entertained the idea that the sufferer was bound to him by the bond of a co-equal humanity. He would have acted—indeed I have known him act—with the same tenderness towards a poor dog which had been, by accident, severely wounded. In his establishment, both slaves and lower animals were equally spoilt; but, as a matter of principle, he would have no more thought of denying that the lash was, at times, necessary for the correction of slaves, than he would have denied that it was necessary for the correction of brute creatures.

One day, in an agony of despair, I threw myself at Mr. Graham's feet, and poured out all my sorrow. His manner was very kind and affectionate—but still that taint of blood! I read the thought in his words of tender pity. He evidently felt that there was *some* difference in our respective natures—a radical defect existing in mine, which demanded his deepest sympathy. The same sort of conversation might have taken place between us on the supposition that some slight germ of insanity existed in my mind, so slight that my reasoning faculties were scarcely affected by it—so slight, in short, that there was every hope the evil might be overcome by healthy mental discipline and strict watchfulness.

My feeling of estrangement towards my father appeared to him unnatural, and not to be accounted for by any ordinary cause. He admitted that mine was a bitter trial; but yet my father had done all that lay in his power to lighten the burden. I had received the blessing of a good education. I had been

brought up in the paths of religion and virtue. I had been associated, as far as possible, with my father's own friends and connexions. I had been treated with the utmost affection and regard. I ought to humble myself to my father's will, and to strive to cast out the evil pride which hardened my heart. By God's grace I might hope to do it; but I must make earnest effort, using frequent prayer.

That interview with Mr. Graham only added to my despair. I had sought consolation of one for whom I felt the greatest reverence and respect; I had sought consolation where consolation may be most surely found—in religious converse and advice; but his words and love utterly failed to alleviate the sorrow of my heart. I little imagined at that time, that what I looked upon with the utmost misery as being the dark depravity of my own heart, was an intuitive sense of God's justice in rebellion against man's false principle and practice. My heart could not be humbled by prayer, but it was humbled by the endurance of ignominy. All pride was cast out of me at last. My cheek no longer flushed at the vile, yet cleverly hidden, insinuations of Abel. I had lost all sense of degradation in a blow from my father. I was callous to all affronts from the visitors who now frequented my father's house for Abel's pleasure and amusement.

Shut out from earthly hope and heavenly consolation, I felt that I was gradually sinking to the level of the wretched beings around me. My mother had claimed me as her own—the inheritor of her nature and her degradation. I suppose it could only have been a question of time how long my bodily strength would have endured this fearful conflict of feeling. The end came at last.

My father was taken dangerously ill. It was my duty to nurse him; and then, God be thanked! I experienced a gleam of relief. I could love him with some of my old love when he was in pain, for those social ties which had estranged me from him were lost in the sick-room. There seemed, in some strange way, to be a bond of union, arising from his sufferings, which bound him to my dead mother and myself. Alas! it was but a slender link.

The hasty vehemence of health and a passionate disposition left him now; he became very mild in his manner, thoughtful beyond his wont, and his thoughts turned heavenward. Mr. Graham frequently came to visit him, reading and conversing on religious matters.

My father one day, when we chanced to be alone, gave me his keys, and bade me get the miniature from his desk. He held it awhile feebly in his hands, gazing fondly upon it, and then made me fasten it by a ribbon round his neck. From that period his thoughts, with few intermissions, centred in the recollections of his wife. Her name was always on his lips, uttered with terms of endearment. All his hope was to meet her again, and be with her in heaven. Not one word, through all this, not one thought, of my mother! I used to sit at his

bedside, my heart ready to burst, hoping and praying that the remembrance of the shameful past might rise up in his mind. They told me that the slightest excitement might be fatal to him, so my tongue was bound to silence.

One night my father desired to be left alone with Mr. Graham. I was told to leave the room; but I stole back, crouching behind a curtain. There was something still on his mind which troubled him. It had no reference to my mother. Mr. Graham cheered him with Christian hope and consolation. I could endure it no longer. I arose from my hiding-place and stood before them.

"My mother!" I exclaimed; "has he prayed forgiveness for that wrong?"

Mr. Graham was startled by my presence. "He has repented," was the reply, "of the grievous sin which gave you existence. I have the fullest confidence in his repentance."

"But his sin against my mother," I cried; for some feeling I could not resist impelled me to speak out. "Torn away from her husband and children—sold away to infamy and shame—that is the sin I speak of!"

"You speak," answered Mr. Graham, "as if this act had been done to some white woman, living in holy matrimony."

I burst into tears, and fled from the room.

They never let me see him again; they never forgave me what I had said. Towards the end, they told me he became very calm, lying a while almost insensible, with the miniature clasped in his hand. Then, with a last convulsive effort, he stretched forth his arms, as if in the act of clasping some form to his bosom, and crying aloud the name he loved so well, fell back and died.

Mary Evans took me away to her house. I was in the greatest need of comfort and support. The misery which appeared to arise from the innate defect of my nature, was wrought to its utmost pitch. I felt that I was guilty of hastening my father's death, and that the inherent defect of my nature was to blame for my guilt.

Abel succeeded in all his plans. The bulk of the property was left to him: a moderate competency only being reserved for me. But the loss of wealth seemed nothing, in comparison with the dark taint upon my soul.

It was long before my bodily health sufficiently recovered to allow of my leaving the Evanses. I then joined Mrs. Summers in Canada, and in her company came to this brave England. It was only by little and little that my broken spirit was built up; that I regained my feeling of self-respect, of self-confidence. Free! I might have been free, and yet have lived degraded, even in the Northern States. At first it seemed utterly marvellous that people in England did not shrink from me. I could not for a long time believe in the possibility of being loved and treated as an equal, by the pure white race. They used to think me cold and proud, when in reality I was holding back in the misery of my old sense of inferiority, and my old fear of insult.

Mrs. Summers and her daughter supported my faltering confidence, and cheered my heart. I told them that I would not have their friends deceived in respect of my personal history, and I was astonished when I found that this knowledge only elicited for me the warmest sympathy and regard. Every lingering doubt was dispelled one day, when those words, which in my own land would have covered me with shame, were whispered in my ear, and the good man asked me to be his wife, who has been my kind husband these many and many happy years.

BUSINESS IN THE BLACK FOREST.

LENZKIRCH, one of the chief towns of the Black Forest, lies in a sunny nook, over which frown the ruins of a keep called Urach Castle. It consists of one hundred and seventy houses and twelve hundred and fifty inhabitants, is quite modern, and only dates back to 1813. In that year the whole market-town was burnt to the ground—an accident only too common in the Black Forest, for the peasants persist in covering their houses with shingles instead of tiles. The priest all but saved the parish-books; but, at the moment when he got them out of the cupboard he lost his head, and they were burned with his house. That is the reason why I cannot describe more than the very latest history of Lenzkirch, but perhaps it is no great loss. It is, however, one of the richest and most industrious towns in the whole of the Badois, and perhaps in all Germany, if we compare the income of the townspeople with their numbers.

In 1775, two peasant lads of Saig, a village about four miles from Lenzkirch, resolved to try their luck as porters in Lorraine. Alois Faller and Mathæe Tritscheller started in the autumn of that year with a load of Black Forest clocks, and returned next summer with full pockets to help as labourers in getting in the harvest. A few years later they met in Lorraine with some Bavarian chapmen, who dealt in straw caps, or what are called cornets de paille. They soon reckoned it up that it would be more profitable for them to carry home some of these hats instead of their money, and they made such profit by the transaction that it occurred to them that a summer trade in straw caps was preferable to a winter march over hill and dale with a heavy load of wooden clocks. Hence they devoted themselves principally to the new branch, but they grumbled at being compelled to buy of the Bavarians, as they lost at least half their profits, through having to pay the middleman. Hence they tried to discover from the chapmen where their factory was, but they were carefully kept from the secret. The Bavarians on one occasion left an invoice in a hat-box delivered to Alois Faller. He could neither read nor write, and had not the remotest knowledge of Italian; but, as he had long been watching to detect the secret, he had it translated, and discovered that the invoice was dated from Trent.

Next autumn Alois was on his road to the Tyrol with a quantity of Lorraine lace which he had taken in exchange, and a heavy load of bird-organs, watch-glasses, snuff-boxes, &c. By the time he reached Botzen, he had disposed of the whole of his stock, and he then started on a tour of discovery for Trent. When he reached that city, he learned that the hats he was seeking were made in the "Sette Comuni," the seven Cimbri-Teuton communities of Upper Italy, and the enterprising forester, therefore, continued his journey to that spot. How he managed to get on with no knowledge of the language, we are not told; but it is quite certain that he laid in a stock of straw hats at a much cheaper rate than he had previously paid the chapmen.

Two of Alois's brothers, John and Kaspar, and his two brothers-in-law, Laurence and Philip Fürderer, of Lower Lenzkirch, now formed a company with the two original founders of the straw-hat trade, under the firm of "Faller, Tritscheller, and Co." John Faller had belonged to the company of the Alsace porters, but left it in anger on being recalled from Altkirch, where he managed the business of the company. He brought the experience of the Alsace porters into the new firm, and thus established it so firmly that the former were soon induced to join the new company. But both parties looked too eagerly after their own profit, and thus injured the general trade, and so at the end of a year they dissolved partnership, and each went their own road. The new firm had great difficulties to overcome, not so much in wars, bad harvests, and depression of trade, as in the obstinacy and domineering spirit of the partners. Several times the firm was dissolved through quarrels, but when the partners grew cooler, they came together again. In spite of all this the firm prospered; the pack was laid aside and carts were substituted, orders were given by post, until at length the firm had its own entrepôt at Florence for the sale of Black Forest wares, and in 1809 opened a house of its own at Vallarona, in the "Sette Comuni," for the straw-hat trade. The Florence branch, however, proved a failure, for the manager's ideas of the business to be done were too magnificent. It was therefore closed in 1811, but it was destined to bear good fruit at a future day. The manager, greatly to the disgust of his partners, married at Florence a poor Italian girl, who, however, understood straw-plaiting, and thirty years later her daughter gave lessons in the art to her Schwarzwald relations, and thus aided in establishing the straw-hat manufactory at home.

If the Florence business entailed considerable anxiety, there was even greater trouble experienced in founding the branch at Vallarona. All the competitors in the straw-hat trade were extremely annoyed at seeing the simple, persevering, and acute foresters settling at the fountain-head of the trade. The Italian brokers even managed to arouse the national jealousy of the native workmen; there were regular tumults, to

which the foresters opposed the brave tranquillity of a conscience at rest, and at length obtained protection and support from the officials. These proved to the communal authorities of Vallarona that the Black Foresters had for forty years been the mainstay of the hat-factories: that when war had kept all other purchasers aloof, they had not allowed themselves to be frightened, and hence their coming had been heralded with peals of joy-bells by the workmen, whose only hope was in them. The truth of this statement eventually gained the mastery, the communes no longer opposed the settlement of the company, and they have since derived considerable profit from the immense trade carried on by the company in all parts of the world.

The great events of the War of Liberation naturally checked the Schwarzwald trade, and when it was hoped that peace would give it a fresh impetus, obstacles were raised by the restoration of those frontier regulations which it was supposed that the French Revolution had abolished for ever. The new generation, however, that now represented the firm of Faller and Co., was not to be baffled by this: one of the partners attended to the business at Lenzkirch, the other at Vallarona. They were also the founders of the hat-manufacture in the Black Forest. The government of Baden had frequently requested them to transplant this trade to their native land; but all attempts failed, through the proportionately higher price of the raw material—the straw. An augmented tax on straw-hats induced the company to make a fresh essay, and the daughter of the Florence manager set to work teaching the Lenzkirch girls the art of straw-plaiting. The manufacture, after many struggles, became a semi-success, and then competition set in. The augmentation of the import duties in America, where the chief trade in straw hats went on, almost entirely ruined the factories. All the smaller rivals disappeared from the scene, and Faller and Co. alone continued the struggle. The universal crisis of 1832 was another very severe blow for the young factory, which did not burst into full life until Baden joined the Zollverein in 1835, and the protection thus afforded the company restored its courage.

The Lenzkirch hat-manufacture soon went on so regularly and satisfactorily that the grandsons of those brave "porters," who defied all the trouble, privation, and dangers of the hawking trade, did not find sufficient toil and excitement in it. In the same way as the earliest founders took to the hat trade, because it offered them employment for the summer, while the clock trade appeared to them almost too hard for the winter, their descendants considered that the summer trade in hats did not suffice them, and they returned to the clocks. The first Black Forest clocks were made at the beginning of the last century. Porters, who had seen such in Holland, on their return employed the long winter evenings in experiments. Some of them succeeded sufficiently to introduce their clocks into

trade, and the secrecy with which they surrounded their work, caused a general desire to discover it; hence clock-making soon was established in several villages. Improvements were then made in the plain wooden clock. In 1730 the first cuckoo-clocks were made; ten years later, perpendicular clocks; ten years after that again, metal works were substituted for wooden. About the year 1770, eight-day clocks were manufactured in the Schwarzwald; and almost simultaneously musical clocks, first with bells, and then with whistles. The latter were gradually so improved that they performed the masterpieces of Haydn and Mozart. At the present day, magnificent musical instruments, playing any quantity of tunes, may be inspected at Schöpperlin's manufactory in Lenzkirch. Some fifteen years ago, a young man of the name of Hauser worked for this gentleman, who gradually grew dissatisfied with his task, and desired progress. A characteristic feature is perceptible throughout the history of the Schwarzwald trades; the forester who comes across anything that strikes him, never rests till he has thoroughly learned how to produce it. The first wooden clocks, as we have seen, were made by peasants, who admired similar articles in foreign parts, and the other foresters no sooner saw their neighbours turn out such things, than they must also set to work at them, and generally improved them. The lucky inventors took the greatest trouble to hand down the secret to their children; but the ambitious neighbours set every wheel in motion, until they had detected it. The same was the case with young Hauser; he knew no peace, because both table clocks and pendules were made in the Paris factories, but none in the Black Forest. He set to work in his leisure hours, making experiments, and was tolerably successful, though he convinced himself that, until he had visited Chaux de Fonds, Geneva, or Paris, he should never be able to produce so perfect a work as was made at those places. Hence he formed the resolution of going on his travels.

In the mean while, he found a supporter in the manager of Faller's Hat Company, who warmly applauded his plans, and promised to find the money to set the business going. Hauser set out and worked as a simple mechanic in the clock factories of Switzerland, and eventually in those of Paris. Of course, the secrets of the trade were not shown him at once; he had often to undertake jobs which he knew by heart during entire months; but as this was the only way in which he could get at the heart of the secret, he put up with it. The result of his perseverance was, that he returned to Lenzkirch in 1850, competent to make as good pendules as were turned out of hand anywhere. A company was soon formed, with a capital of one hundred thousand florins; in 1851 operations were commenced, and although for the first few years no profits were made, the partners bided their time, and at the present moment the shares pay so considerable a dividend, that they are quoted considerably above par.

Any one who has the courage to visit Lenzkirch, will do well to visit the two factories I have referred to.

THE CARTE DE VISITE.

THERE are probably few pairs of eyes turned towards this page which have not been directed before now to some nob, or moulding, or key-hole, or door-handle in a photographic studio, and so have remained fixed in a delirious stare till the carte de visite was an accomplished fact. It is commonly a very heavy blow when one first sees the result of that operation which we have so many of us gone through. We explain ourselves in our different ways when we have our first interview with our own portraits after they come from the photographer's. If we are of a demonstrative nature, and besides have not been bred at the Court of St. James's, we exclaim "Lor!" when we first see ourselves. Some again will utter a mere unintelligible exclamation of surprise or grief; others will bless themselves; and truculent and hot-livered persons will invoke upon the head of the artist that which is not a benediction. There remains yet a class of well-bred and undemonstrative individuals who confine themselves to a speechless examination of the newly-arrived cards, merely expressing their agony by an eloquent silence, by twisting the work of art first this way and then that, holding it now at a distance, and now near, and anon upside-down.

We get accustomed to the portrait after a time, are able to face it, to see it on our drawing-room table in a small frame, or in an album, or even in the books of our dear friends and acquaintances. If we are public characters (and it is astonishing how many of us now find that we are so), we are actually obliged at last to get accustomed to the sight of ourselves in the shop-windows of this great metropolis. Our shepherd's-plaid trousers, our favourite walking-stick, our meerschaum pipe, meet our gaze turn where we will.

We do not all come out of the photographic studio alike unhappy. There are those to whom the process does justice, as well as those to whom it does injustice; nay, there are some on whom it confers actual benefits, and who show to greater advantage on the carte de visite than in their own proper persons. I have myself sat on two occasions for one of these portraits. On the first I was simply occupied in keeping still and presenting a tolerably favourable view of my features and limbs to the fatal lens; but the result was so tame and unimposing a picture that I determined on the next occasion to throw more intellect into the thing, and finding a certain richly-gilded curtain-tassel convenient to my gaze, I gave it a look of such piercing scrutiny, and so withered and blasted it with the energy of my regard, that I almost wonder it did not sink beneath the trial. That look has, I am happy to say, been reproduced faithfully, and no one could see the portrait without giving its original credit for immense penetration, great energy and

strength of character, and a keen and piercing wit. It is difficult to lay down rules of general application, but it may be safely said that the people who come out of the photographic struggle the best, and who are least injured in the engagement, are people of ordinary appearance, from whom we do not expect much. It is common to hear some lady who is generally acknowledged to be pretty, urged by her friends to sit for a carte de visite. "You really *ought* to have it done," they say; "you would make such a charming portrait." The portrait is taken, and is, after all, not charming. On the contrary, it is sufficiently the reverse to make the dearest of the victim's female friends happy.

Those to whom this process does the greatest justice are people the proportions of whose faces are well balanced, whose features rather err on the side of smallness than largeness, and who are not generally considered to be beautiful. It is possible to have symmetrical features and a well-proportioned face and yet to fall very far short of beauty; and it is equally possible for a countenance to be wrong in some of its proportions, and yet leave an impression of beauty on our minds. But any one in this last case will be a great sufferer in going through the photographic process. As the two likenesses appear side by side in the album they will astonish all who look at them. They thought the one was such a much plainer person than she here appears, and the other so much prettier.

There are many beauties of colour and expression which cannot be rendered by the agency of the camera. Colour of hair, colour of the complexion generally, of the lips, the cheeks, the eyes, all these go for nothing; and as to expression, the most expressive countenances suffer most invariably: a little happy touch of expression is a phenomenon one hardly ever remembers to have seen caught in a photographic portrait. If the face be left to take its chance—so to speak—a heavy or mournful look is the usual result, and if any particular expression be attempted it is almost sure to look like a grimace; a truth of which we constantly see illustrations in the portraits of those engaged in the theatrical profession, when some special expression has been attempted. People of mediocre abilities, as people of mediocre beauty, will come off best in sitting for their photographs. They will astonish us by looking so clever, as the others by looking so pretty. Real genius and real beauty will often astonish us the other way. It is as difficult to give a man's outside, with all we know of it in a portrait, as to produce a fair representation of his mind in a biography.

There are, however, very many motives which all work in consonance to make us patronise this very thriving business of photography. First of all there is the appeal to our vanity. You yourself are the subject of your own especial consideration and that of one or two others for some considerable space of time. What a delightful thing that is. Whether you are good-looking or ugly you like that, depend on it. Then, the portrait done, you have the

opportunity of distributing yourself among your friends, and letting them see you in your favourite attitude, and with your favourite expression. And then you get into those wonderful books which everybody possesses, and strangers see you there in good society, and ask who that very striking-looking person is?

Those albums are fast taking the place and doing the work of the long cherished card-basket. That institution has had a long swing of it. It was a good thing to leave on the table that your morning-caller while waiting in the drawing-room till you were presentable, might see what distinguished company you kept, and what very unexceptionable people were in the habit of coming to call on you. But the card-basket was not comparable to the album as an advertisement of your claims to gentility. The card of Mrs. Brown of Peckham would well to the surface at times from the depths to which you had consigned it, and overlay that of your favourite countess or millionaire. Besides, you could not in so many words call attention to your card-basket as you can to the album. You place it in your friend's hands, saying, "This only contains my special favourites, mind," and there is her ladyship staring them in the face the next moment. "Who is this sweet person?" says the visitor. "Oh, that is dear Lady Puddicombe," you reply carelessly. Delicious moment!

Yet, sitting for one's photograph is, after all, not a pleasant performance to go through. Of course it is a mere nothing to what one used to endure in sitting for a regular portrait in a gloomy apartment in Newman or Berners-street. Many of us remember that operation vividly enough, and some even of the new generation can call to mind what they have suffered as children in the artists' quarter just named. They remember the dismal house with the curious window on the first-floor cut up so as to encroach on the second. They remember the dirty servant of all work who opened the door, and who ushered the victims into that dingy dining-room which was too suggestive of dentistry to be pleasant. As in the dental dining-room, so in this of the artist, there was a wonderful impossibility of identifying the apartment with eating and drinking. It would be impossible for anybody to enjoy either food or wine within its precincts. A few very old periodicals, a very fat and dirty volume of the *Every-day Book* of Hone, and some one or two books of amateur poetry, were on the central table, and as to works of art these abounded at the dentist's as at the painter's, but with this difference: at the first they would be engravings by different hands, and bearing affecting inscriptions in pencil, that made one's grinders shake in their sockets. "To Mr. Lipskrush, with the artist's grateful remembrances," or, "from a grateful patient," or, "in commemoration of many professional favours conferred on the artist." In the Berners-street dining-room the works of art were without such inscriptions. The pictures which hung round the artistic dining-room—and many of which had no frames—were ordinarily of elevated subjects: Titania

with Bottom wearing the ass's head, Ophelia hovering over the book, Ugolino gaunt with starvation, Virginius sacrificing his daughter, and other exhilarating companions to the dinner-table. There they hung, a perpetual monument to the want of taste of the British public, and there hung some of the portraits which the artist had been driven to paint, when he found that high art left his dining-table with nothing more eatable upon it, than an army list or a number of Blackwood. Among these latter works would be included "Portrait of the Artist," painted evidently at the Ugolino period, glaring round at society out of hollow, sunken eyes. The artist's father, his mother, and a general officer, who bore a strong resemblance to the artist himself in a Nathanic red coat and epaulets.

What wonder that one should go up from such a dining-room expecting to hear in a soothing voice the words "Open, a little wider," with an accompaniment of rattling instruments in a drawer? And what a place was the Studio itself when you reached it. That window observed from outside as encroaching on the second-floor was blocked up as to the lower half, so that there was no chance of seeing anything of the street unless it was the garret-window and the parapet of the house opposite, with an old flower-pot, a dangling fragment of clothes-line, and a row of hideous distorted chimneys showing their gnarled and twisted arms against the dull grey sky. To spend an afternoon looking at such a prospect was not hilarious. Nor was the interior of the room much better. The half-finished pictures leaning against the wall, the studies from nature or copies of the old masters—old enough to have grown up into misters one would think by this time—the plaster casts of nude arms doubling themselves up so as to bring out the muscles in a very unnecessary manner, for nobody ever said they were *not* muscular, the antique heads, with noses on which the blacks and dust had gathered loweringly; their hollow parts and sunken lines protected by the nobbier portions, relieving with a white and brilliant glare the bits of old tapestry, frouzy costume, and improbable armour—all these matters made up an interior which if it was picturesque (which it wasn't) was infinitely dismal and disheartening.

You were seated on a throne, too, which to persons not of the regal class was in itself disconcerting. Some question of perspective, or of points of view, rendered it needful that you should be raised on high, and so you were perched up on a green-baize throne. You sat on a cut-velvet old-fashioned chair, whose timbers creaked responsive every time you sighed, and more old-fashioned chairs were placed about the room, which might have reminded one of ancient times, if they had not been so much more suggestive of Auction Marts and nosey brokers.

What an afternoon's entertainment! If the artist talked, you felt he was not minding his business; if he worked, he was apt to be silent; while, if he tried to combine labour and conversation, his talk would be characterised by the Remark unconnected and the Reply inap-

propriate, and the afternoon's labour would very likely result in that disastrous phenomenon, an unrecognisable likeness.

Now what is the photographic ordeal after this? Nothing. Absolutely nothing.

But, just as the sufferings which we are called on to undergo have in this age been reduced, so also, alas! have the powers of endurance, and so the same human being, who once bore a journey of three days and nights by coach, grumbles at a two hours' whirl by railway; and he who has known the horrors of a month or so of sittings, finds that to wait an hour or so in a photographer's gallery, going right through all the portraits on the wall and table, exhausts his patience. When at last he is released from the waiting-saloon and mounts to the operating-room above, that he is in the worst possible cue for the performance in which he is to take a part. He feels at once dazzled and oppressed by that glare of light above his head. It makes him blink, it closes up his eyes, it gives him a sense of having been up all night. The properties about the room, too, are bewildering. There are all sorts of things appropriate to all the different professions which different sitters may be expected to follow. There is a piece of complicated wheel-work for a mechanic, a pair of globes for a geographer, a nautical compass for the mariner, and a pair of compasses for a civil engineer. There, too, is a palette and an easel for the artist, a book for the divine, an empty brief for the lawyer, an hour-glass for the philosopher, and an inkstand and a pen with a tremendous feather in it for the author. Lastly, there is a wretched painted scene which is intended to take the public in as a landscape-background, but the honest instrument will never fall into the scheme, and hating the landscape always proclaims it for the sham which it is. This background is intended for private and non-professional persons, and there is also a pillar and a curtain—but who are those for? What is the profession of that unhappy and misguided wretch who is supposed to pass his life in a perpetual environment of pillar and curtain? There may have been persons so situated once, but now we turn our pillars into letter boxes, and the curtain draperies into ladies' cloaks rich in festoons of crimson.

The thirty seconds which the light requires to take a likeness are so utterly exhausting, that if there were one more necessary I believe no human being could go through with the thing. The horrible necessity of keeping motionless is an incentive, of almost irresistible force, to violent action. Terrific are the temptations of those thirty seconds. You feel that you must make a face, yell, spring up, and cut a frantic caper. You say to yourself: "Suppose I were to sneeze, to choke; suppose I were to burst out into a rude guffaw? I will, I must! Suppose I were to squint; I think I *am* squinting. The brass knob on which I am told to fix my eyes is getting muzzy; it is huge in size; it revolves; I can't see it. My hands are tingling, swelling, bursting. All is dizzy before me—I shall explode!"

There is, in truth, much that will always be

adverse to the production of an agreeable photographic likeness; but at the same time, it is quite as true that a very great deal might be done by a little more knowledge, thought, and painstaking, to render such portraits infinitely more pleasant than they are generally found to be.

People who are considered good-looking, and those even who are beautiful, have a hundred different aspects, and to seize the best one and reproduce it is a function of Genius and not of Chemicals. If you have had a friend whom you have wished to show off to another friend, have you not often been disappointed that the first was "in such bad looks" as really not to look even pretty? The person who was expected to be struck with admiration has wondered at your taste, and you have been obliged to own that there was matter for disappointment. Even in nature, out-of-door nature, this is so. The view which you saw from the hills above the old French town, with the evening sun lighting up the rich plain, making the mountains in the distance amethysts, and the river a line of gold, while the one cloud shadow lay over the old cathedral tower and blackened it, so that all the rest sparkled the more—what is that very same scene when the sky is grey, and the mountains grey too, and plain and river and cathedral are all of one monotonous slate-colour!

But though it may take a Reynolds to do justice to the beauty of the living creature, and a Turner to reproduce that of the mountain and the plain, there is much to be got out of the Photographic Lens—which it would be wickedness to disparage—infinity more than it is ordinarily made to convey to us. There are one or two simple matters which might be borne in mind by photographers with immense advantage to their sitters, and to their own reputations as well. They do not yet quite understand their trade.

The two great main considerations which should occupy the mind of every photographer are these: What is the best view he can take of his sitter, and what the effect of light and shade which will be most becoming to that sitter's countenance. On these two considerations the success of the portrait entirely depends.

Now as to the question of view there is some tolerable amount of understanding manifested by the great body of photographers. The sitter is generally so placed that the most favourable aspect of his face may come before the lens, and so that the rapid perspective to which he is subjected shall distort him as little as may be. It is pretty well known that if his legs are nearer the machine than his body the first will be disproportionately large for the last; that if his hand is stretched out towards the artist, it will be twice the size it ought to be, and that even the fact of his nose being nearer the camera than the rest of the face will give to that central feature a large and swollen aspect.

Such general rules as these, applying equally to all sitters, are then pretty well understood. But this is not enough. The photographic artist who would wish to produce a really successful portrait, should study the special defects

and the special beauties of the individual before him, and consider in what view the faults of such a physiognomy will assert themselves least strongly, and the merits show the most. This is the function of an artist, of a man of considerable natural abilities, and immense experience. It is exercised by some of the best French photographers in an eminent degree, and by one—M. Camille Silvy—who has set up his studio here in England.

M. Silvy—and almost he alone in this country—seems to understand the immense importance of *shadow* as an ingredient in a successful portrait. This is his great stronghold, more even than the taste which he shows in his choice of view, costume, and accessory. These last are great elements in M. Silvy's portraits, but the distinguishing merit of them is the well-chosen light and shade. It is perfectly surprising that this has not been more considered by all photographers. Their process is a thing simply of light and shade. It is the light that makes the portrait come into existence at all. The patches of shade, more or less dark, alone prevent a *carte de visite* from being a sheet of blank paper. Surely the shapes of those patches of shade are all-important. It is little known—and when it is known we shall have prettier photographs—that a light coming from above the head of the sitter is the most unbecoming thing in the world, and that a face so lighted cannot by any possibility show to advantage. Now, the ordinary photographer's glass-room has a diffused light all over it, but mainly coming from above, so that the eyes show in two dark caverns of shadow, while a black patch appears under the nose, throwing the termination of that feature up to the skies, and making it show as an isolated nob, the full size of which is—and few of us can bear this—done the amplest justice to. This top-light, moreover, scores out relentlessly those baggy marks which many of us have too well developed under the eyes, and which are not characteristics of the human beau-ideal, while—in the case of ladies—a kind of trough on each side of the mouth is joined to the chin-shadow after the fashion of a Vandyke beard.

In ladies' portraits, the elimination of beauty, and not so much of character as in men, is the thing to be borne in mind. Now, the most becoming light is one level with the face, or even, perhaps, somewhat beneath it—it being a great mistake to suppose that the foot-lights on the stage are unbecoming. Such a light as that described above would make any face in the world ugly, and yet it is just such a light which is to be found in most photographers' rooms.

As much as possible, as much as may consist with the action of the photographic process, the light from above should be got rid of in taking these portraits, and a light from the side brought into use. This seems to be understood in a rare manner by M. Silvy. His portraits are very popular, but, perhaps, many of the people who

like them are ignorant of the reason which causes their preference. The reason lies, to a large extent, in the softness and size of the shadows which lie in such agreeable masses on the faces which come within the range of this photographer's skill. He has discovered the simple truth, that in an affair in which it is a question altogether of shadows, the distribution of those shadows is a thing of vital importance. Of every face in this town there is a view to be taken, and a light and shade to be selected, which will show it to advantage or disadvantage. To subject all to the same glaring light, descending on all alike, and to all unbecoming, is scarcely the way to produce agreeable results. Yet we have known a photographer standing under his own light, and most hideously distorted by that circumstance alone—without the additional help of his instrument—to argue with us, the wretched sitter, that we were none the worse for his light!

It is difficult to speak strongly enough about this question of shadows and their value. Queen Elizabeth, in her ignorance, thought shadows unbecoming to the glory of her majesty, and wished to be painted without any at all; and, doubtless, there are people who now-a-days think shade a smudgy dirty thing, the less of which comes upon their countenances the better. But light cannot be thrown out in its full brilliancy, nor forms shown in their variety, without its aid. Why, one of the main differences between a fine day and a dull one lies in the shadows which proclaim the first, and are wanting in the other. On a wet, dull day, as you stand in the grey sickly light, you may look all round about in vain for your shadow; it is not to be found. A cheerless, monotonous glare is over all things. The sun comes out, and the first thing it does is to cast your shadow dark and clear and sharp upon the ground—your shadow and that of the trees, the buildings, and all things else that come within reach of its rays. How different everything looks then; how solid, how bright, how finished! Those shadows are larger in the early morning and again as the day declines, and it is one reason of our admiration of those two seasons that then the rising or sinking sun catches but one side of every object, and leaves so large a portion of the scene lost in a mysterious and softened shade.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS'S NEW READINGS.

On Thursday, April 24th, at ST. JAMES'S HALL, Piccadilly,
at 8 o'clock precisely,

MR. CHARLES DICKENS will read his
NICHOLAS NICKLEBY
AT MR. SQUEERS'S SCHOOL,

AND

THE TRIAL FROM PICKWICK.

And on Wednesday Afternoon, May 7th, at 3,
And on Wednesday Afternoon, May 21st, at 3,

MR. CHARLES DICKENS will read his
DAVID COPPERFIELD.

These are the only TWO AFTERNOON READINGS that can possibly take place.

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